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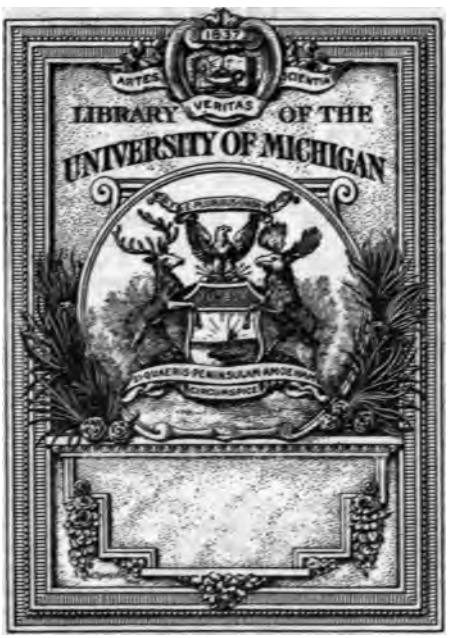

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PREFACE

THIS book is planned for those who approach Chaucer only as the father of modern English poetry — for the great number, then, who will not approach him by the logical but frequently impracticable route of historical English grammar. For such readers a fairly complete glossary has seemed a better aid to the interpretation of the text than the usual grammatical outline, which the reader untrained philologically seldom fails to misunderstand. Sections I. and V. of the Introduction should be read at the outset; the rest — containing chiefly the editor's opinions about Chaucer — should be let severely alone until the student, through careful reading of the texts, knows something at first hand about the poet, and so has gained an opinion of his own, or at least has earned the right to have one made for him. The text has been revised especially for this volume on the plan described in the Appendix. For notes and illustrations I am under constant obligations to Professor Skeat's monumental edition; a few notes borrowed verbally are indicated by inverted commas and the initial S.; an occasional note from the "Globe" edition, similarly, by a G. I am under peculiar obligations, also, to Professor Kittredge's scholarly "Observations on the Language of Chaucer's Troilus," which has helped me through many a dark place in Chaucerian usage. My book has gained much from the generous criticism of friends, — Professor L. W. Spring and Dr. M. C. Sutphen. Errors — some must remain, I trust not many — are chargeable only to myself. Readers will confer a favor by communicating any they may detect. Finally, if this little book had ventured to borrow a great name, it would have been that of Dr. Frederick J. Furnivall, president of the Chaucer Society, and in our day chief promoter of the study of our great English poets.

F. J. M., JR.

WILLIAMSTOWN, MASS., October 9, 1899.

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INTRODUCTION

I

LIFE OF CHAUCER[1]

GEOFFREY CHAUCER was born in London about the year 1340, the thirteenth of Edward the Third's reign. His father John Chaucer had served in the king's household before settling down as a prosperous wine-merchant. Chaucer himself first appears in 1357 as a page in the service of Elizabeth, wife of Prince Lionel of Clarence. In such a position he had to serve deftly at table, help about the rooms, — now as errand boy, now as chamberlain, — be cheerful and tactful with his superiors, and, not the least useful part of such a training, hold his own with mischievous fellow-pages.

[1] I have entered here only what seemed to me the important and interesting events of Chaucer's life. The reader will find the complete annals, drawn from official records, in Professor Skeat's edition, and the same material reduced to narrative form in the Introduction of the "Globe" Chaucer or in Professor Lounsbury's *Studies*, vol. i. In all cases he should make the following corrections: (*a*) Under 1373, April 28 should be inserted as the date of Chaucer's return to London from Italy (see *Mod. Lang. Notes*, xi, 210ff.), and the text brought into conformity with the new date. (*b*) Under 1399, Chaucer's additional pension from Henry IV., not "four" but *fourteen* days after the coronation, the correct date being October 13, 1399 (see Flügel, *Anglia*, xxi, 245ff.).

In 1359 we find him a soldier in the unfortunate campaign that terminated with the peace of Brétigny. Chaucer had his full share of the fortunes of war, for he was captured before Réthel in Champaigne. Soon his king contributed toward the ransom the very considerable sum of sixteen pounds. From this time on, with rare intervals, Chaucer was in the royal service. In 1367 he was granted a life pension of twenty marks for faithful service as a valet of the king's household.

Greater responsibilities awaited him. From 1370 to 1386 we find him frequently employed on diplomatic missions. Only two of these need detain us. From December 1, 1372, to April 28, 1373, he was sent on secret business of the king to Genoa and Florence. He thus passed some three months in the Italy of Petrarch and Boccaccio — in an atmosphere of greater poetry and nobler painting and sculpture than the Middle Ages had yet seen. Such influences could not fail to affect profoundly Chaucer's view of his own art. The impression of this first visit was reinforced during a second mission, this time to Milan, May 28 to September 19, 1378.

Chaucer must have been a good servant of the crown, for a year after his first Italian mission he received a grant of a pitcher of wine daily from the king's pantry. This gift the poet, like a practical man, commuted for cash. More substantial preferment came to him June 8, 1374, in the appointment to the office of comptroller of the customs and subsidy of wools, skins, and leather, for the port of London. The duties of this important office removed him from the congenial atmosphere of the court. Now his days were spent over the invoice-book, and hours of each day in

the watching of tricky tradesmen and in the valuation of wools and leather. Chaucer had been for some time married to Philippa, one of the ladies of the chamber to the queen; and we must think of him for ten years and more as leading the life of a hard-worked business man, returning nights to his home in chambers over Aldgate and to the solace of his old books. In these years of a routine broken only by occasional visits to the Continent, he found time, nevertheless, to write some of his best poetry.

On May 8, 1382, he received the additional office of comptroller of the petty customs. In February, 1385, relief came at last, and probably from Queen Anne, in the privilege of naming a permanent deputy. This freed him from the irksome routine of a customs office and gave him time and incentive to plan and partially to execute great works like *The Legende of Good Women* and *The Canterbury Tales.*

It appears that before 1386 he had given up his quarters over Aldgate and moved down the Thames to Greenwich, for in that year he sat in Parliament as a knight of the shire for Kent.

In the autumn of this year, Thomas of Gloucester, under color of a regency of eleven persons, deprived Richard II. of all power. Chaucer, as a partisan of the king and of the absent John of Gaunt, lost both his offices; and the year that had seen him in lucrative employment and in honored political position left him friendless and poor, politically suspect, and with slight enough hope for the future. To these embarrassments was added in 1387 a personal grief, the loss of his wife.

When on May 3, 1389, Richard II. shook himself

free from the guardianship of his nobles, Chaucer entered anew upon the tedious road of official preferment. The position of clerk of the king's works at Westminster gave him from July 12 of that year relatively about the pay of a head clerk in bank to-day. From this time on he must have been in straitened circumstances, always an office-seeker, and glad of any employment that came his way. So he repaired St. George's Chapel at Windsor, filled in washouts on Thames-bank, and served as forester of Petherton Park in Somerset. Better times followed; in 1394 the king granted him twenty pounds a year for life, adding in 1398 to this yearly gift that of a tun of wine.

Henry IV., the son of Chaucer's old patron John of Gaunt, deposing Richard II., came to the throne September 30, 1399. The poet immediately addressed to him the ballade entitled *A Compleynt to his Purs*. The king responded promptly to this humorous begging by doubling the poet's former pension of twenty marks and confirming the grant of 1394.

On Christmas eve of this year Chaucer took a long lease of a house behind Westminster Abbey. We may imagine him planning for a peaceful old age, his comfort assured by his pensions, and his pleasure by his books, — honored by the young poets who called him master. But he had only made a stage toward his burying-place, for he died October 25, 1400, aged some sixty years, and was buried in the north transept of Westminster Abbey — first of the poets in the "Poet's Corner."

Thus ended a life passed amid extraordinary events. Chaucer as a young man had seen Edward III., great warrior, if not great general, lead his host and fly his

hawks over half of France. A few years later he saw the king in his dotage, and the land at the will of the infamous Alice Perrers. In June, 1377, he had heard the streets of London resound with loyal "long-live-the-kings," while the fountains ran wine to pledge the new king Richard II. Only four years later he shuddered at the hideous yells of "Jakke Strawe and his meynee," as a populace maddened by its wrongs and drunk with blood burned and slew in London. In middle life, he saw his political friends go to the block, and his reckless king seek a disgraceful retreat. Add to this, commerce of the court and knowledge of affairs; travel, and an ardent love of books; and we have the outline of a life singularly rich in all the raw materials of poetry. It shall be our pleasant task to retrace this life as it expressed itself in letters, following this time with patience and reverence, so far as the poet himself permits us, the growth of a great poet's mind and art.

II

CHAUCER'S LITERARY DEVELOPMENT [1]

IT appears desirable to treat the order of Chaucer's works, a chapter which is based chiefly upon ingenious conjecture, apart from the perfectly authenticated annals of his official life. The dates of his most important works rest only upon inference; and scholars

[1] In this section I have made no attempt to enumerate the poet's minor works. Such information is readily accessible in the recent editions of Chaucer's works, or in Professor Lounsbury's *Studies*, vol. ii. Its repetition here could only burden, to no purpose, the beginner's memory.

differ widely in their views of his chronology. This much appears to be certain, that Chaucer passed through two imitative periods before arriving at full independence. He certainly began under the influence of the French literature of his time, and wrote for some years under the inspiration of Italian literature before attaining, when quite in middle life, the style most congenial to his nature. Accordingly, we divide his literary life into three periods, the French, Italian, and English.

The French period (before 1373).

Chaucer began by imitating the French poems in favor at the English court. These poems had certain common qualities: first, they were frequently cast in the form of a dream or vision; second, seldom presenting characters from real life, their *dramatis personæ* was usually made up of abstract qualities. Thus in the most famous poem of the class, *Le Roman de la Rose*, — left unfinished by Guillaume de Lorris about 1237, as a romantic and sentimental allegory, and finished about 1277, by Jean de Meung, as a satirical allegory, — the lover, falling asleep, sees in a beautiful garden a rosebud which he determines to pluck; certain characters, or rather qualities, such as Beauty, Wealth, Hospitality, aid him; others hinder him, such as Pride, Evil Report, Poverty. After many adventures and infinite talk, the lover plucks the rose. All this, being reduced to common sense, means that the quest of a mistress is aided by certain qualities, balked by others, in the lover and loved one. This poem lacked neither cleverness nor style of a certain sort, and its influence on Chaucer was lasting. Early in life he translated it at least

in part,[1] though it is doubtful if any portion of his version has come down to us.

A very graceful poem of this style is Chaucer's *Compleynt unto Pite.* In it the poet complains that having appealed to Pity against his lady's cruelty, he finds Pity dead and buried in his lady's heart, — a very artificial conceit, but expressed with a sweetness of style that had not before appeared in English literature.

Many features of this French style appear in his poem the *Boke of the Duchesse*, written in the autumn or winter of 1369, as a lament for the death of the Duchess Blanche of Lancaster, wife of John of Gaunt. The poem is cast in the form of a dream, and, in spite of a beautiful tribute to the dead lady, and one or two charming descriptive passages, it will leave the reader dreamy — perhaps drowsy.

We should add to the poems of this period *Chaucer's A. B. C.*, a prayer to the Virgin Mary, paraphrased from the French of Guillaume de Deguilleville.

Chaucer wrote also during this time many short lyrical poems,

> "*And many an ympne* [hymn] *for your halydayes,*
> *That highten balades, roundels, virelayes,*" (*Leg.* 422)

the loss of which is deeply to be regretted.[2]

[1] The charming English version of *Le Roman de la Rose* consists of three disconnected fragments, — *a*, ll. 1–1705; *b*, ll. 1706–5810; *c*, ll. 5811–7969. Of these, the best critics believe that *a* probably is, *c* may be, and *b* surely is not, by Chaucer.

[2] Chaucer adapted his lyrical forms from Guillaume Machault and the courtly school founded by him. Traces of Machault's influence appear in Chaucer's early works, while it is likely that a lost work, *The Boke of the Leoun* (see p. xxxv.), is a version of Machault's *Dit du Lion.*

It has been recently shown that Chaucer knew, and borrowed

He had learned from the French poets little except the art of writing graceful verse; in fact in this whole period he was on a side-track, and his real progress was to come only after retracing his steps, and making a fresh start. In the chaotic state of English literature, it was, however, no little gain to have adopted even an artificial standard. It is noteworthy also that the contemporaries of Chaucer, and for a century, his successors, never got beyond the decorative and allegorizing style, which their master early rejected. But we have yet to find the real Chaucer. The poems of this first period, with their excess of allegory and of decorative description, yield absolutely no hint of the poet's varied life in court and camp, a life that he, being Chaucer, must already have observed sagaciously and sympathetically.

The Italian period (1373 or 1378-1385).

When Chaucer went to Italy in the winter of 1372–73, he was well past thirty, — past the most impresssionable years; and yet this visit marks the beginning of a new attitude toward letters and toward life. Italy was the one country of that time in which really great literature had been produced. Dante, dead now some fifty years, had treated fearlessly and vividly of the future life, introducing into a modern language the "fair style" he had learned from Virgil; Petrarch, now nearing the

a trait or two from, *Le Paradys d'Amours* of Froissart (see Kittredge, *Englische Studien*, xxvi, 321ff.). Add to these, the authors of the *Roman de la Rose*, Guillaume de Deguilleville, Otes de Gransoun, for the *Compleynt of Venus;* the *Trojan History* of Benoit de Saint Maur, used in *Troilus*, several anonymous *fableaux*, for the *Canterbury Tales; Le Roman de Renard*, for the *Nun's Priest's Tale*, — and the list of Chaucer's obligations to French literature is practically complete.

end of his life, had expressed in his sonnets, with infinite sweetness and skill, all the minutest refinements of emotion that glorified an ideal love; Boccaccio had given a faithful picture of the passional life of his time, in the *Decameron;* in his poems *Il Filostrato* and *La Teseide*, to name only the most important, he had carried into subjects of mediæval romance a realism all his own, and a ready picturesqueness of style gained from the study of the Latin of the Silver Age. Quite aside from their more personal work, Petrarch and Boccaccio both did much to spread the long-neglected study of the great Latin authors; Petrarch, chiefly by precept, in his widely read letters; Boccaccio, by example, in a series of Latin works on classical mythology, to which several generations, including Chaucer's, went to school.

It seems likely that Chaucer, like the average cultivated Englishman of to-day, would first have studied Italy's greatest poet. Already in *The Life of Saint Cecilia*, a poem written shortly after the first Italian journey, an invocation to the Virgin freely rendered from *Paradiso* xxxiii. appears; and an occasional phrase or simile in Chaucer's later work reminds us that he knew thoroughly his *Divine Comedy.* But Chaucer could have gained little from Dante except an ideal of nobly sonorous verse, and of finely terse description, for the great English poet lacked utterly the *saeva indignatio*, as he did the sublime sweetness of the great Italian.

Probably the first effect of Italian literature on Chaucer was rather to make him discontented with his previous work than to suggest a new style. We must remember, too, that from 1374 he was learning

the exacting duties of his office of comptroller of customs. It seems likely to me that the time between the first and second Italian journeys was comparatively unproductive in poetry, and that the poet gave up his evenings to those more serious studies which, as squire of the king's chamber, he must have neglected. It is probable that we should attribute the series of "tragedies" later used as the *Monk's Tale* to this period; while he may well have undertaken his prose version of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*[1] in these years, — a task which brought him face to face with the greatest ethical and philosophical problems. Somewhat related to Boethius in feeling is *The Tale of Melibeus*,[2] later told by Chaucer himself in the Canter-

[1] The Roman senator and philosopher Boethius (ob. 525 A. D.) was unjustly imprisoned and executed by the Emperor Theodoric. While in prison he wrote the book of *Consolations*, adding to Christian resignation all the resources of classical philosophy and style. The book is cast in the form of a dialogue between the prisoner and philosophy personified, and written in alternate prose and verse. The following analysis may be useful:

Book I. proves that lack of self-knowledge is the cause of all human ill — a Socratic doctrine. Book II. displays the nature of fortune and proves that her favors are uncertain and unsatisfactory. Book III. proves that God is the *summum bonum*, and that, God being all powerful, evil can exist only in appearance. Book IV. treats of the mystery of evil and suffering, and proves that the injustice of the human lot is only apparent; distinguishes between God's providence and blind fate; and proves that every fortune is really good. Book V. attempts to reconcile God's foreknowledge with man's free will.

The book influenced profoundly all the thinking of the Middle Ages. The reader will feel that it supplied Chaucer with food for thought — and that for no brief period.

[2] Skeat and others place in this period *Griseldis*, — the *Clerk's Tale; Constance*, — the *Man of Law's Tale;* and most

bury pilgrimage. I should be inclined to place its composition here, for it is difficult to believe that Chaucer would have included this rather stupid piece among the *Tales* were he not working in old material.

On Chaucer's second short visit to Italy in 1378, I fancy that, like most travellers, he did the things he regretted not having done the first time. Petrarch and Boccaccio were now dead, but their fame had only grown; and when Chaucer recrossed the Alps in the late summer of 1378, one of his sumpter horses must have carried a volume of selections from Petrarch, and Boccaccio's great poems, *Il Filostrato* and *La Teseide*. From this time forth his interest lay not in allegory, not in philosophy even, but in life itself.

Troilus and Chriseyde,[1] the longest and most ambi-

of the prose *Parson's Tale*, in the years closely following 1372. This opinion is possibly true for *Constance;* it is probably wrong for *Griseldis* (see *Mod. Lang. Notes*, xii. 15f.). I feel that Chaucer in the mood of the "retractions" (see p. xxxv.) was capable of writing the *Parson's Tale;* it is hard to see why he should have written it as an independent work.

[1] This poem, like many of the Italian period, is written in the beautiful seven-line stanza, or "rime royal," borrowed apparently from the French poet, Guillaume de Machault. The first stanza will serve as a specimen.

> "The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
> That was the king Priamus son of Troye,
> In lovinge, how his aventures fellen
> Fro wo to wele, and after out of joye,
> My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye.
> Thesiphone, thou help me for t'endite
> Thise woful vers, that wepen as I wryte."

The following poems of the Italian period are written in this metre, — *Troilus*, *Anelida*, *The Parlement of Foules*, *St. Cecile*. Among works probably of the English period, the *Prioress's Tale*, the *Clerk's Tale*, the *Man of Law's Tale*, and several minor poems.

tious of Chaucer's poems, is based on *Il Filostrato*, and yet it should hardly be called a translation of that poem. Of its 8232 lines, about a third are translated or closely imitated from Boccaccio; the rest is Chaucer's own. The story came to the English poet as follows: Chriseyde remains in Troy as a hostage. Prince Troilus, hitherto a scoffer at love, falls desperately in love with her, and through the aid of Pandarus, her cousin and his confidant, wins her body, and as he believes, soul. Their happiness is of short duration, for in a general exchange of prisoners she returns to her father, Chalcas, in the Greek camp. There, under the seductions of a new lover, Diomed, she quickly forgets Troilus and her vows of constancy. Troilus, learning of her infidelity, seeks death in battle. With Boccaccio, Troilus, whether as successful or abandoned lover, is the central figure; with Chaucer, Chriseyde occupies the centre of the scene. How she yields herself to a true lover reluctantly, only to throw herself wantonly into the arms of a false one,— that is the problem of the poem for Chaucer; and he works it out with far keener analysis and with much greater sympathy than Boccaccio bestowed upon this character. Pandarus, who in Boccaccio is merely a second Troilus, becomes in Chaucer an old uncle, and the humorous villain of the piece. His cheerful cynicism and inexhaustible loquacity serve as an admirable foil and relief to the tragic passions of the lovers Troilus and Chriseyde. Chaucer has greatly enlarged and deepened the scope of his original, and his poem, unique among his greater works in being carried to completion, remains one of the most beautiful long poems in the English language.

It is far indeed from such a work to the dream-poems of his first period. In treating a real passion and a human tragedy elaborately and analytically, Chaucer approaches the problems and the methods of the modern novel.

The poem of *Anelida and Arcite* probably followed *Troilus*. Chaucer borrowed the name of the hero and a portion of the narrative from *La Teseide;* it is clear also that he intended to use freely the setting of Boccaccio's epic, for the poem ends abruptly with the promise of a description of the temple of Mars, which we shall find later in the *Knight's Tale*. Nothing but the general outline of the story is suggested in the fragment left to us. Arcite has won the love of Anelida only to betray her, and she complains bitterly of her sad lot. The poem, then, promised to be a companion piece to *Troilus*, treating of a man's infidelity as the latter had of a woman's. Chaucer probably abandoned this work because he had found a better use for the rich material contained in the *Teseide;* and we must place about 1381 the poem of *Palamon and Arcite*, later the *Knight's Tale*. Many critics believe that *Palamon and Arcite* was a fairly literal translation of Boccaccio's epic, and, like *Troilus* and other poems of this period written in the seven-line stanza;[1] but the proof for this ingenious theory has

[1] This theory is based upon the fact that fairly literal translations in stanzas of portions of the *Teseide* are found in *Anelida and Arcite*, ll. 22–46, *Troilus*, v. 1807–27, and the *Parlement of Foules*, ll. 183–294. These fragments Ten Brink, and afterward Skeat, regarded as remnants of *Palamon and Arcite*, supposing that Chaucer had determined to suppress the early version. Against this it may be urged that Chaucer could scarcely, if he had wished, have suppressed a poem so important as this

always seemed to me insufficient, and I feel confident that *Palamon and Arcite* mentioned in the *Legende of Good Women* was in all essentials the *Knight's Tale* as we have it. In treating of this poem by itself we shall take up the details involved; it is sufficient now to remind ourselves that in contrast to *Troilus* it is a romance; action and description, not states of mind, constitute its interest.

In Boccaccio Chaucer must have recognized a kindred spirit, and in fact they are as much alike as an Englishman and an Italian can well be; Boccaccio desentimentalized, if I may be permitted the word, differing from Chaucer chiefly in his more poignant tragic register. It is a thousand pities that Chaucer never laid eyes on a copy of the *Decameron*. If he had, it is hard to believe the *Canterbury Tales* would have remained incomplete.

The influence of Petrarch on Chaucer must have been very slight. Chaucer undoubtedly bowed to his great reputation, but he can never have really liked his sentimentality, while it is doubtful if he ever fully recognized the unapproachable perfection of his style. In any case Chaucer used Petrarch's work but sparingly. A single sonnet, No. 88, paraphrased in *Troilus*, i. 400–20, and the *Clerk's Tale*, a translation of Petrarch's Latin version of Boccaccio's *novella* of Griselda, exhaust the list of Chaucer's obligations.

The Parlement of Foules is one of the few works

supposed literal translation of the *Teseide*, — its total disappearance is extremely improbable; furthermore, all these scattered translations from the *Teseide* are better accounted for on the supposition offered later. (See p. xix, note.)

of this period that can be dated with any certainty. It was written in the spring of 1382, in honor of Anne of Bohemia, the new bride of Richard II. For this occasional poem Chaucer returns to his first style; casting the story in the form of a dream. It is Saint Valentine's Day, and the birds gather in full parliament to pass upon a case of love. The Royal Eagle and two of lower kind dispute the hand of a Formel (female) Eagle. The case is pleaded eloquently, or cynically, according to the nature of the pleaders, and finally the birds gallantly leave the choice to the lady, giving her a year of grace, and suggesting that her choice can only fall upon the Royal Eagle. The whole is a graceful apologue of the courtship of the queen. King Richard had in fact two rivals, and the negotiations for the match lasted a year. Chaucer has prefixed an abstract of the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero — it was the book he was reading as he fell asleep — and an elaborate description of Venus's temple from the *Teseide*.[1] Here first appears as a pleasant relief to elaborate description and courtly sentiment the genial humor that is to become the very mark of Chaucer's genius.

The last work of the Italian period is the *Hous of Fame*. In it Chaucer returns to the "light and lewd" (simple) four-stressed couplet of his early period, and again he casts the poem in the form of a dream. The

[1] Now that the plan of *Palamon* (*Knight's Tale*), was complete, Chaucer was free to use elsewhere all matter in its original that he had left untranslated or rendered very freely. So he fits into the *Parlement* a description of the Temple of Venus, and attributes to Troilus — the passage is lacking in several MSS., hence must be regarded as a retouch — the account of Arcite's death. (See p. xvii, note, and *Knight's Tale*, ll. 1951ff. note.)

poet tells us that he had this vision the tenth day of December; the year appears to be 1384. The dreamer is transported in his vision to Venus's temple of glass, on the walls of which he sees depicted the whole story of the *Æneid;* in seeking parallels for Æneas' treachery to Dido, Chaucer mentions many famous betrayers of women, and their victims — a list we shall meet again in the *Legende of Good Women.* In the second part, the author is carried up into the heavens by a golden eagle, who serves as guide to the Hous of Fame. There the poet sees engraved on the rock of ice that serves as foundation the great names of olden time, and in the temple itself the statues of the world's greatest authors, a curious list — Josephus, Statius, Homer, Dares, Dictys, Lollius, Guido delle Colonne, Geoffrey of Monmouth — these all historians who "bare up" the fame of their respective nations; among poets, Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, and Claudian.

All manner of people pass before the Goddess of Fame, craving renown. For the same services she now grants fame, now withholds it, following ever the promptings of a cynical caprice. It is the finest, and almost the only deliberately satirical passage in Chaucer. A bystander asks our poet the natural question, —

> "*Artow come hider to han fame?*" (l. 482)

and here with a fine pride Chaucer retorts: —

> "*Nay forsothe, frend!*" *quod I;*
> *I cam nogt hider, graunt mercy,*
> *For no swich cause, by my heed;*
> *Sufficeth me as I were deed,*
> *That no wight have my name in honde.*
> *I woot myself best how I stonde.*"

Such self-criticism is as welcome as it is rare with our poet; and we learn gladly that Chaucer, scorning the scramble for notoriety, was content to rest upon a proud consciousness of his own worth.

Leaving the Temple of Fame the poet enters the House of Rumor, whither all words spoken on earth fly, and the poem breaks off abruptly just as a man "of greet auctorite" is about to explain the meaning of the hurly-burly in Rumor's house.

The first two books of the *Hous of Fame* are merely descriptive, the last, though it ends tantalizingly where the best part was to come, tells us more about Chaucer's attitude toward his own art than all his other writings. With back turned upon the struggle for public recognition and the beaten paths toward literary renown, the poet's business is henceforth to lie within the House of Rumor, which only those of true ear and steady eye can properly report.

> *"lord! this hous in alle tymes*
> *Was full of shipmen and pilgrymes,*
> *With scrippes bret-ful of lesynges,*
> *Entremedled with tidynges,*
> *And eek alone by hemselve.*
> *O, many a thousand tymes twelve*
> *Saw I of these pardoneres*
> *Currours* [couriers] *and eek messangeres,*
> *With boistes crammed ful of lyes."*

It will be Chaucer's concern to pick out the "tidynges" (true news) from the "lesynges" that envelope them, to miss no phase of the great pageant in this our house of rumor, and to report it faithfully to us, who else were only confused thereby.

No poem of Chaucer's shows so clearly his acquaintance with Dante as the *Hous of Fame*. While there

is little direct translation, the imagery of the poem constantly recalls vaguely that of the *Divine Comedy;* but, strangely enough, it recalls it almost by way of burlesque. Nothing could be more unlike Dante in tone than its diffuse and chatty style; and the mere fact that Chaucer bears his Dante in mind as he writes such a work, shows how little, admiring him heartily, the English poet really understood the great Florentine.

As we review the work of the seven years during which Chaucer followed Italian models, we must marvel at its quantity and variety: *Troilus*, all analysis of feeling, *Palamon*, all movement and color, *The Parlement of Foules*, most graceful and charming of his occasional verse, finally *The Hous of Fame*, with its hints of a new critical attitude — all this constitutes not only a notable series of literary experiments, but also presents to us the poet in more varied and interesting lights than even the more perfect work of his final period. The training in Italian schools had enriched his style, had lent volume and beauty to his verse, and, best of all, had pointed out the men and women about him as the true subject and inspiration of his poetry.

With this training and this achievement, one might suppose that Chaucer the thinker, and Chaucer the poet, had passed the time for new beginnings; but if there is anything more characteristic of Chaucer than his open-mindedness it is the slow unfolding of his genius; and all the world knows that this middle-aged customs officer, now well along in the forties, was in a year or so to be the author of the *Prologue*.

There is an obvious exaggeration in speaking of Chaucer's French, Italian, or English period, as if

Chaucer were not always himself, whatever his literary models might be; and yet the work of his later years is in a peculiar fashion original. France and Italy had contributed much to the style of the English poet; they could help him little in the swift observation of real life, in its firm and genial presentation. From this time on Chaucer wrote scarce anything but short narrative poems, a literary form that reached with him at a single step its perfection.

The English period (1385–1400).

The first work of this new realistic period is interesting in two respects, — in the prologue of the *Legende of Good Women* Chaucer writes for the last time, and with rare felicity, a dream-poem; in the *Legende* itself he presents his first collection of tales. If we may trust the testimony of his disciple Lydgate, the book was made "at the request of the quene." That it was written in her honor is clear. It seems plausible, though it is by no means proved, that Chaucer owed to the queen's good offices the privilege of appointing a deputy, February, 1385; if so, the *Legende*, as an expression of gratitude, is likely to have been written the same spring.

The prologue[1] (ll. 29 ff.) tells us how Chaucer loves old books above all things else: —

[1] The prologue of the *Legende* exists in two versions, designated by Professor Skeat as A and B. B is the version written to be read before the court in 1385, A a later revised version made after the queen's death in 1394, with the omission and alteration of matter personal to her. The chronology of the versions was definitely fixed by Ten Brink, *Englische St.* xvii, 13; an article which Professor Skeat, holding the opposite view, has failed to take into account. I analyze B in the text.

"And as for me, although I can but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
And to hem yive I feyth and ful credence,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence
So hertely, that ther is game noon
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon,
But it be seldom on the holyday,
Save, certeynly, that whan the month of May
Is comen, and that the floures ginnen for to springe, —
Farewel my boke, and my devocioun."

Only the love of May, and particularly the love of the daisy, can draw the poet from his books. He worships the daisy with a fairly mystical devotion, (ll. 45 ff.) : —

"As I seyde erst, whan comen is the May,
That in my bed the daweth me no day,
That I n'am up and walkying in the mede,
To seen this flour agein the sonne sprede,
Whan it upryseth erly by the morwe,
That blisful sighte softneth al my sorwe —
. . . . . .

And I love it, and evere alike newe,
And ever shal, til that myn herte dye.
. . . . . .

And, whan that it is eve, I renne blyve,
As sone as evere the sonne gynneth weste,
To seen this flour, how it wol go to reste,
For fere of nyght, so hateth she derknesse.
Hir chere is pleynly sprad in the brightnesse
Of the sonne, for there it wol unclose.
Allas, that I ne had Englyssh, ryme or prose,
Suffisant this flour to preyse aryght."

So the poet in the May season passes a whole day in the worship of "the flour;" and in the evening time when it had closed, returning to his house, he composes himself to sleep in an arbor, "for deynte of the

newe someres sake." There in dreams he returns again to the daisy meadow. And lo! from afar comes walking the god of Love leading by the hand a queen who wears a daisy crown. The poet fearing not a little the god, and loving already the queen, sings, to himself we must suppose, this ballade[1] in her honor: —

"*Hyde, Absalon, thy gilte tresses clere;*
Ester lay thou thy mekenesse al adoun;
Hyde, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere;
Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,
Make of youre wifhode no comparysoun;
Hyde ye youre beautes, Ysoude and Eleyne;
My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

"*Thy faire body lat it nat appere,*
Lavyne; and thou Lucresse of Rome toun,
And Polyxene, that boughten love so dere,
And Cleopatre, with al thy passyoun,
Hyde ye youre trouthe of love, and your renoun,
And thou, Tesbe, that hast of love suche peyne;
My lady comith, that al this may disteyne.

"*Hero, Dido, Laudomia, alle yfere,*
And Phillis, hangyng for thy Demophoun,
And Canace, espied by thy chere,
Ysiphile, betraysed with Jasoun,
Maketh of your trouthe neythir boost ne soun,
Nor Ypermystre, or Adriane, ye tweyne;
My lady comith, that al this may disteyne."

As Chaucer thus challenges for his lady a place above the beauties of olden time, a company of nineteen ladies, the good women of the *Legende*, draw by, followed by an infinite number of women, who as they see the daisy crown cry out with one voice: —

[1] This beautiful ballade has inspired a number of imitations, for which see Skeat's note.

" Heel and honour
To trouthe of womanhede, and to this flour
That bereth our alder pris in figurynge."

Suddenly the god of Love detects a stranger kneeling on the edge of the throng; and as Chaucer answering a peremptory question gives his name, the god reproves him sternly for daring to approach the daisy queen, — for Chaucer has written much evil against love and against women, especially in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, and *Troilus and Criseyde*, — and threatens to punish him severely for this offence.

At this point the queen undertakes the defence of the trembling poet. He may have been slandered, he may have sinned in ignorance, or merely through following his old authors; in any case a god should show clemency. Furthermore Chaucer has written many a work in praise of women, or otherwise moral in tone; such as the *Boke of the Duchesse*, *Palamoun and Arcite*, the *Lyf of Seynt Cecile*, and others. The queen exacts of the erring poet reparation, not punishment; and the god of Love gracefully consents.

Chaucer here seeks to express his thanks and to make his excuse. The queen stops him (l. 475): —

" Lat be thyn arguynge,
For love ne wol nat countrepleted be
In ryght ne wrong."

Love is a free gift and not to be won by argument. Chaucer's penance shall be to write " yeer by yeer " a " glorious legende " in the honor of women true in love, and to the dispraise of faithless men. When the book is finished, he shall hand it to the queen of England at her country palace of Eltham or of Sheen.

The god of Love, half rallying Chaucer that he is ignorant of his benefactress' name, tells him that she is the Queen Alceste, — Alcestis, paragon of wives, who died to redeem her husband from Hades. Hercules restored her soul to light; and later Jove "stellifyed" her; while Cybele created the daisy in remembrance of her faithfulness and spotless innocence. As Alceste blushes at her own praise, the god of Love charges the poet to write as the last and crowning story of his *Legende* the life of Alceste, bidding him further to choose his own metre, and to begin with Cleopatra.

Chaucer turns to his books and sets about the writing of his *Legende of Good Women.*

For charming and not too prolix description, for a land where the beautiful creatures of one's dreams move in an ideal landscape, we find not the like of the prologue of the *Legende* until the *Faerie Queene.* The compliment to Queen Anne was particularly graceful, for everybody knew that Alceste's praise was the queen's.

The poem is a well-nigh perfect example of its artificial, if charming, class. Many will prefer its sweetness and quiet humor to the brilliancy and wit of *The Rape of the Lock.* It is equally a classic of occasional poetry.

The *Legende* itself was to have consisted of twenty lives of good women, beginning with Cleopatra and ending with Alcestis. Boccaccio's Latin work, *De Claris Mulieribus*, which in its turn was suggested by Ovid's *Heroides*, probably served as the model for such a compilation. Chaucer begins with the death of Cleopatra, a model of concise and intense narration,

notable particularly for a vivid description of the sea-fight off Actium.[1]

Thisbe, the second legend, from Ovid, and Dido, the third, from Virgil, bear well the comparison with their famous originals, for what they lack in intellectual subtlety and finish of style is more than made up by the simplicity and directness of their pathetic appeal. Ysiphile and Medea share the fourth legend; for were they not both undone by the false Jason? Here Chaucer begins to weary a little of the unfailing trustfulness of his "good women," and one may more than suspect that he is, at heart, for the astute deceiver. With the tragic story of Tarquin's base crime, and the Roman death of Lucrece, the poet returns to the serious mood. Most readers will prefer the fine directness and virility of his treatment, to the closer analysis of morbid passion and greater artistry of Shakespeare's *Lucrece*. But when Chaucer reaches the legend of Ariadne, although he curses "Duk Theseus" roundly,

"A twenty devil way the wynde him dryve,"

[1] I cite the passage, which may well be compared with Chaucer's earlier-written account of a tournament, *Knight's Tale*, ll. 1741 ff.: —

"Up goth the trumpe, and for to shout and shete,
And paynen hem to sette on with the sonne;
With grisly shout out goth the grete gonne,
And heterly they hurtelen al attones,
And fro the toppe doun cometh the grete stones.
In gooth the grapenel so ful of crokes,
Amonge the ropes and the sheryng hokes;
In with the polax preseth he and he;
Behynde the maste begynneth he to fle,
And out agayn, and dryveth hem over borde;
He stynteth hem upon his speres orde;
He rent the sayle with hokes lyke a sithe;
He bryngeth the cuppe and biddeth hem be blithe;
He poureth pesen upon the hacches slidre;
With pottes ful of lyme, they goon togidre;
And thus the longe day in fight they spende. — ll. 635-650.

one feels the hollowness of it all. Chaucer is tired of his task, and from this time the legends are dispatched unceremoniously enough. Ovid's story of Philomela, the seventh legend, is perfunctorily retold; the story of Phillis and Demophon is, on the contrary, almost burlesqued; and when the ladies of the court hear Chaucer's closing warning solemnly read —

> *"Be war, ye wymmen, of youre sotile fo!*
> *Syns yet this day men may ensample se,*
> *And, as in love, trusteth no man but me,"*

we may imagine the laughter that would have greeted the roguish poet.

The ninth legend, that of Hypermnestra, remains unfinished; Chaucer only half achieved his plan, yielding to the inevitable monotony of the subject. Twenty stories in which the woman should be true and the man faithless, — there was little enough opportunity for variety in such a task. No wonder that Chaucer left it half done! Yet the *Legende* remains one of his more important works. It was the first time that he had fairly tested his powers in short narrative, and it was in this work that he became master of the form. The poorest legends compare favorably with the *St. Cecile* written some twelve years earlier, and the best, such as *Cleopatra*, *Thisbe*, and *Dido*, fall little, if any, short of better known masterpieces in the *Canterbury Tales*.

But the *Legende* could gain only partial success; as a scheme it was foredoomed to failure. Building upon the experience gained from it, it fell to Chaucer to frame the ideal setting for a collection of tales, a setting that offered him all possible flexibility and variety — the Canterbury pilgrimage.

III

THE PLAN OF THE CANTERBURY TALES

At some time later than 1385, and probably in the year 1387, Chaucer began writing and compiling the *Canterbury Tales*. The plan was an ambitious one. Thirty pilgrims, including Chaucer, bound for the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket, while lying at the "Tabard" in Southwark, agree at their host's — Harry Bailey's — suggestion to tell each two tales going and two coming. This would make in all one hundred and twenty tales, or with those of a chance addition to the party, the Canon's Yeoman, one hundred and twenty-four. These tales would have been linked together by appropriate talk of the pilgrims, some description of the roads, and presumably some account of the stay at Canterbury. The journey, though a scant sixty miles, would have taken about three days and a half either way. Such was Chaucer's original plan as set forth in the *Prologue*, ll. 790ff.

But it appears that he very soon gave up this plan. The *Canterbury Tales*, as we have them, cover roughly the journey to Canterbury, each pilgrim telling one tale, and the host, "judge and reportour" of the story-telling, expresses his contentment as the journey draws to a close: —

> "*Lordynges everichoon,*
> *Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon;*
> *Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree;*
> *I trow that we han herd of ech degree.*
> *Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce.*"

If this were Chaucer's final plan, the "boke of the

Tales of Canterbury," with twenty-three out of thirty-one story-tellers represented by twenty-four tales, is more than two thirds finished. It should be added that a number of the dialogue "links" between tales were never written, so that the tales exist in nine detached groups (designated by the letters A–I). Of the twenty-four tales written, four remain unfinished, two (Chaucer's and the Monk's) interrupted by the host, speaking for a wearied company. Chaucer, cut off in the middle of his *Rime of Sir Thophas*, avenges himself by telling the very dull prose tale of Melibeus.

So far as possible Chaucer puts in the mouths of the Canterbury pilgrims tales he had already written. Sometimes the result is excellent; the story of Palamon and Arcite could not better have suited the Knight, if it had been written for him in the first instance; while the jolly Monk with his dolorous "tragedies" is an admirably comic figure, were not the joke unduly prolonged. Yet this use of old material occasionally produces disconcerting results; it is not a little surprising for instance to hear the "Second Nonne" speak of herself as an unworthy "sone" of Eve (l. 62), while it is even stranger to find the bearded shipman including himself among womankind (l. 11ff.) — an indication that the story was originally written for the Wife of Bath. The Man of Law appears to promise a prose tale (l. 96), and tells in stanzas a religious legend quite out of keeping with his character. It would be easy to multiply such cases of inconsistency, but this will suffice to show that we have in the *Canterbury Tales* only the rough draft of Chaucer's plan. On the other hand, these inconsistencies are decidedly of minor im-

portance. Where we have stories of great interest and merit, we may well disregard their loose connection with the general plan; while occasional masterpieces of characterization like the prologues and tales of the Wife of Bath and of the Pardoner, show us the standard Chaucer set for himself. Small wonder that he sometimes fell short of it.

The great advantage of the framework of the *Canterbury Tales* is its flexibility. On pilgrimage all classes of society, excluding only the very highest and lowest, might meet, and did meet in a common religious purpose, and on a certain equality. There was room for the knight with the glory of a score of battles, and the honest ploughman who tilled his own acre; for the Prioress, fine lady born and bred, and the Wife of Bath, jovial but frankly vulgar tradeswoman; for the pale and studious Clerk, and the boisterous Somnour with his "fir-reed Cherubynnes face." All this we shall consider more at length when we treat of the *Prologue;* suffice it to say that such a company, each telling his tale after his kind, affords an infinite number of tones and treatment. There can be no monotony when the Miller follows the Knight, and the Nun's Priest's "tale of a cok," the Monk's "Tragedies." The *Canterbury Tales* thus avoids the monotony of tone which even the greatest collections of tales, — witness the *Decameron* or *The Earthly Paradise* — occasionally show.

This impression of variety is heightened by the fact that the tales are told on a journey with a constantly shifting scene. Dispute, criticism, and comment break the formality of story-telling; finally the plan is admirable in that the story-tellers are not brought together

for the express purpose of having their say; the story-telling is merely incidental to the pleasure of their holydaying.

The writing and arranging of the *Canterbury Tales* must have proceeded intermittently from 1387 to 1400, the year of Chaucer's death. A prose treatise on that rude astronomical instrument the astrolabe was begun in 1391 for the poet's ten-year-old-son "Louys." An obscure poem, *The Compleynt of Mars*,[1] in spite of attempts to discover in it personal allusions, appears to be only a *jeu d'esprit* in versified astrology. It certainly adds little of interest to the work of this period. Several shorter poems, most of them in the ballade form, were written in these later years. Their tone is usually ethical and didactic, suggesting the translator of *Boece* and the writer of the *Parson's Tale* rather than the poet of the *Prologue*. But poems in the lighter mood are not lacking; the old, sly humor comes out in the *Envoy to Scogan*, written somewhere after 1391. Chaucer now writes but little, as these lines tell us: —

> "*Ne thynke I never of sleep to wake my muse,*
> *That rusteth in my shethe stille in pees;*
> *While I was yong I put hir forth in prees;*
> *But al shal passen that men prose or ryme,*
> *Take every man his turne as for his tyme.*"

This same regret is expressed in different words in the envoy of the *Compleynt of Venus*. Much of this minor verse has real dignity, and none of it is positively dull. Only once does its sententiousness reach

[1] The latest and best study of this difficult poem is that of Prof. J. M. Manly, published in the Child memorial volume of *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature*, Boston, 1896.

eloquence; in the following lines one will recognize the didactic, and frankly so, yet genuinely poetic note, which English literature shows oftener than any since Greece and Rome: —

> "*That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,*
> *The wrastlyng for this worlde axeth a fal.*
> *Here n'is non hoom, her n'is but wildernesse.*
> *Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out of thy stal,*
> *Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;*
> *Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee lede,*
> *And trouthe shall delivere, it is no drede.*"

If the last decade of Chaucer's life had often produced work of this quality, we should willingly compare it to the serene and wise last years of Goethe. As it is we shall have to admit Dr. Furnivall's view that the closing years were a period of declining powers. The brightest, most virile genius that England has seen bowed under adversity. We may hope that the resignation and philosophy that breathe through the scattered works of this twilight hour made up, in some degree, to the man for the waning of creative power. Our loss in the poet is none the less great. No other theory than that of decaying faculties will account for that curious document the "Retractions," appended to the *Canterbury Tales*. Imagine a poet, easily the greatest of his day and conscious of his own worth, disowning his best work and praising God for his worst. And yet this belier of himself is Chaucer under the influence of misguided, if sincere, religious emotion.

The last words of the Parson's sermon are spoken, and we are about to take leave of the Canterbury pilgrims, when the author of the book detains us for a moment with these words of personal explanation: —

"Wherfore I biseke yow mekely, for the mercy of God, that ye preye for me that Crist have mercy on me and foryeve me my giltes, and namely of my translaciouns and enditynges of worldly vanitees the whiche I revoke in my Retraccioun; as is the book of Troylus; the book also of Fame; the book of the xxv Ladies; the book of Seint Valentynes day, of the Parlement of Briddes; the Tales of Canterbury, — thilke that sownen unto synne; the book of the Leoun; and many another book, if they were in my remembraunce; and many a song and many a lecherous lay, that Crist, for his grete mercy, foryeve me the synne.

"But of the translacioun of Boece *De Consolacione*, and othere bookes of Legendes of Seintes, and omelies and moralitee, and devocioun, that thanke I oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and his blisful mooder and alle the Seintes of hevene," etc.

These are honest words; and, had they come out of a passing black mood, they would hardly have survived the mood itself. They are the words of a man of broken spirit, for whom resignation alone remains. This is a gray ending for such a life. We shall choose rather to remember the long years of unconscious preparation for great poetry, and to return to that marvellous dozen years following 1379; a time of full maturity and incessant productiveness, beginning with *Troilus* and not ending until the *Canterbury Tales* were practically complete. This is the real Chaucer that we must learn to know.

IV

THE GENIUS OF CHAUCER

THE test of style is ultimate in the determination of genius. By this we mean that there must be perfect accord between the thought in the writer's mind and the words that express that thought to the reader.

Mere originality, nobility even of thought, hardly lie to their creator's credit, unless he has for them words equally novel and lofty. It is chiefly this command of style in the larger sense that gives the poet his advantage over the average fine-souled man — that makes a Burke greater than a Pitt. The first question that we ask ourselves, then, after the immediate relish of curiosity is passed, is, "Has this new writer the supreme gift of style that separates him from the writers of the day?" And this is the question we must sooner or later raise concerning Chaucer. Is his immediate and lasting charm the result of the finest genius, or, as it appears, wayward and almost accidental?

The analysis of a few passages will only confirm the feeling that Chaucer has that beauty and appropriateness of phrase which is proper to the great poets. His style bears all the traces of conscious art. Take this description of a bristling forest, —

> *"First on the wal was peynted a forest,*
> *In which ther dwelleth neither man nor best,*
> *With knotty, knarry, bareyn treës olde*
> *Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to biholde;*
> *In which ther ran a rumbel in a swough,*
> *As though a storm sholde bresten every bough."*[1]

How well the harsh and angular adjectives express the gnarled trees; when Chaucer will describe the continuous roaring of the wind in the branches, how he fills the line with resonant and prolonged consonants, "m's," "n's," and "r's," and finally the crash of the "st's" in "storm," "bresten," which renders the crack of great branches torn from the parent

[1] *Knight's Tale*, ll. 1117ff.

stem! Here are the exact words to express what the eye and the ear gather from the wild scene.

I would willingly quote entire the scene of Arcite's death, the perfect sincerity and simplicity of which has touched generations of readers.[1] Note only the force of the redundant "Allone, withouten any compaignye" when put in the mouth of one upon whom had just smiled the prospect of a life in Emily's company: —

> "*What asketh man to have,*
> *Now with his love now in his colde grave*
> *Allone withouten any compaignye?*"[2]

In the following lines the very structure of the verse, the balanced participles, "giggynge," "lacynge," etc., the clause that overruns its line to end abruptly and strangely with "gnawynge," all heightens the effect of bustle and breathless preparation for the tournament: —

> "*Ther maystow seen . . .*
> *Knyghtes, of retenue, and eek squyeres*
> *Nailynge the speres, and helmes bokelynge,*
> *Giggynge of sheeldes, with layneres lacynge;*
> *Ther as need is, they weren nothyng ydel;*
> *The fomy steedes on the golden brydel*
> *Gnawynge, and fast the armurers also*
> *With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro,*" etc.[3]

Let these few examples suffice for many.

[1] *Knight's Tale*, ll. 1907ff.

[2] "How does the repetition and amplification give force and bitterness to the thought, as if Arcite must need dwell on his expected loneliness in order to feel it fully!" — LOWELL, *Conversations*, p. 17.

[3] *Knight's Tale*, ll. 1644ff. My friend, Dr. M. C. Sutphen, kindly supplies a parallel from Aristophanes, — the description of a busy arsenal, — which presents similar stylistic features: —

Single lines show the same felicity. We are told of the Monk that —

> *" whan he rood men myghte his brydel here*
> *Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd as clere,*
> *And eek as loude as dooth the chapel belle,*
> *Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle ;"* [1]

and the very whistling of the wind is in the second line with its thin "i" and "e" sounds and its resonant "n's." Or in the description of the Miller —

> *" He was short-sholdered, brood, a thicke knarre "* [2] —

the verse with its weighty compound word and its halting rhythm moves with the hulking carriage of the Miller's powerful frame.

In these instances we are dealing with no narrowly rhetorical matters; it is this mastery of his instrument that marks the great artist.

From a very early time men have noted and admired the realism of Chaucer, and probably the time will never come when lovers fail to recognize something of themselves in Troilus, and men cease to find their neighbors among the Canterbury pilgrims. Perhaps the handsomest tribute ever paid to this quality of Chaucer's is that of a very poor poet of the succeeding century, the anonymous writer of *The Book of Curtesye* (E. E. T. S., Ext. Ser. No. iii. ll. 337–343), —

> *" τὸ νεώριον δ' αὖ κωπέων πλατουμένων*
> *τύλων ψοφούντων, θαλαμιῶν τροπουμένων*
> *αὐλῶν κελευστῶν, νιγλάρων συριγμάτων."*
>
> ACHARNIANS, ll. 552ff.

> " Our arsenal would have sounded and resounded
> With bangs and thwacks of driving bolts and nails,
> Of shaping oars and holes to put the oars in ;
> With hacking, hammering, clattering, and boring ;
> Words of command, whistles, and pipes and fifes."
>
> FRERE'S Translation.

[1] *Prologue*, ll. 174ff. [2] *Prologue*, l. 549.

" Redith his bokes fulle of all plesaunce,
Clere in sentence, in longage excellent,
Brefly to write suche was his suffesaunce,
What-ever to sey he toke in his entent,
His longage was so feyre and pertinent,
That semed unto mennys heryng
Not only the worde, but verrely the thing."

It would be hard to better the last line. It is the complete fusion of the word in the thing that makes Chaucer not only one of the great artists, but one of the great realists.

We may well carry our analysis of this recognized quality a point further and ask, What are the methods of observation and setting-forth that make the *Prologue* and the best of the *Canterbury Tales* unique for vividness and reality? We may say at the outset that Chaucer never sought the cheaper and more obvious methods of modern realism. We never find anything like an inventory of the moral qualities of the Canterbury pilgrims; we seldom have a complete account even of their dress and physical characteristics. Of the Shipman we are told only that he rode badly, was dressed in a long coat of rough cloth, with a dagger by his side, that he was tanned and weather-beaten. The rest is description of his "easy" handling of a wine cargo, of his piratical traits, and of his seamanship, except for the single line, —

" With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake." [1]

Yet what a sea-picture there is in this simple statement. I need no more than this to see the Shipman, legs wide-braced on a heaving deck, eyes under bearded brows strained out into the storm, while the gale sweeps a great beard back over his shoulders.

[1] *Prologue*, l. 406.

After we have learned how the Friar lived by his wits and pleased his very dupes, we part from him with the lines, —

> "*And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,*
> *His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght*
> *As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.*" [1]

We have seen the snap of his eye and know why everybody liked him, and a poor widow would give the fellow her last farthing.

Arcite has been cruelly crushed under his horse. Chaucer says simply, —

> "*Tho was he corven out of his harneys,*" [2] —

and we shudder. No surgeon's exact description of the hurt could so move us.

Two lines express the whole restless character of the Man of Law, —

> "*Nowher so busy a man as he ther n' as,*
> *And yet he semed bisier than he was.*" [3]

You cannot forget that the Reeve is "sclendre" when you have seen his legs through Chaucer's homely simile, —

> "*Ful longe were his legges and ful lene,*
> *Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene.*" [4]

Nor will you doubt that the Prioress is sentimental and tender-hearted when you learn that a trapped mouse claimed her tears, that the death or even the chastisement of one of her lapdogs caused bitter weeping, finally that the same "smale houndes," on a diet of "rosted flessh, or milk, and wastel bred," fared better than a mistress who kept ascetic rules for herself, — not for her pets. Can you finally imagine a

[1] *Prologue*, ll. 266ff.
[2] *Knight's Tale*, l. 1858.
[3] *Prologue*, ll. 321f.
[4] *Prologue*, ll. 592ff.

better simile for Chaucer's lover and soldier-squire than the almost commonplace, —

"*He was as fresh as is the monthe of May*"?[1]

It is this faculty of seizing upon the characteristic attitude or action that makes Chaucer's descriptions so vivid. He wastes no time upon the things that might be said of any lawyer or any miller, but goes straight to the traits that mark his particular lawyer and miller. We all have some way of looking or acting that reveals us; often the idiosyncrasy is so slight as to escape even our closest friends until a skilful mimic shows that this mere trick of expression marks us as our very selves. Chaucer's power lay in the unerring observation of such peculiarities. It is a method closely allied to that of caricature, and as such, much abused even by the better students of human eccentricity, — witness Dickens and Balzac. This pitfall Chaucer measurably escapes. Of course we know that the Miller's mouth was not literally "wyde . . . as a greet forneys;" the comparison none the less renders unforgettable its bigness and redness.

At the risk of repetition we must insist that Chaucer seldom tries gradually to build up a character; that he could have done so Chriseyde is abundant proof. His method then differs essentially from that of the modern novelist. His presentation of character, on the contrary, comes instantaneously through illuminating flashes, and the great masters of the short story, such as Maupassant, are in technique his true successors. It is this power of flashing truth into a

[1] *Prologue*, l. 92.

description that our poet of the *Book of Curtesye* had in mind when he spoke of Chaucer's "longage" as being so "pertinent" that it conveyed

"Not only the word but verrely the thing."

The most serious passages of his poetry are seldom without a sub-quality of humor, while usually this quality is unrestrained. But Chaucer's humor rarely passes over into satire. At most he is finely ironical toward the offender against the congruous, sincerely loving and even respecting him against whom he has turned the laugh. It is this unshaken good-humor and friendliness which is most characteristic of the poet's attitude toward men. He loves to laugh at them, but he loves them too. And his humor is so fine and pervasive that it claims oftener a smile than a laugh.

Alert as this humor is, its touch is kindly. The Prioress escapes with only a fling at her airs and graces; the Monk provokes only an ironical approval of his hunting; so the Friar is commended for loving a barmaid better than a leper: the Doctor loves gold because it has medicinal value: —

"For gold in physik is a cordial,
Therfore he loved gold in speciall." [1]

Sometimes this humor takes the form of burlesque. What more delicious and yet what more realistic than the description of Chaunticleer? —

"His comb was redder than the fyn coral,
And batailled as it were a castel wal;
His byle was blak, and as the jeet it shoon;
Lyk asure were his legges and his toon;
His nayles whiter than the lylye flour,
And lyk the burned gold was his colour." [2]

[1] *Prologue*, ll. 43f. [2] *Nun's Priest's Tale*, ll. 39ff.

So the old romancers loved to describe a Sir Lybeaus or a Lancelot; and Chaucer must have observed the cock with a real admiration for his splendor, though seeing too the fun of cock character. Vain pedant that he is, the cock deigns to rally anxious Dame Pertelote in Latin, and to add the interpretation: —

> "Mulier est hominis confusio:
> *Madame, the sentence of this Latin is,*
> *Woman is mannes joye, and al his blis.*" [1]

We can see what Mr. Robert Grant has aptly named "the furtive conjugal smile."

Few characters fail to challenge Chaucer's genial irony; and yet there are those, such as the Knight, the Parson, and the Plowman, that are treated with perfect seriousness. Souls so finely simple and genuine are impregnable even to the kindest ridicule. They disarm the humorist. "Sitting beside them the Comic Muse is grave and sisterly," is Mr. Meredith's fine word.

The frank realism of Chaucer's humor brings him at times into conflict with modern standards of the fitting, and even of the permissible. In the *Prologue* (l. 731), he has already warned us that —

> "*Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,*
> *He moot reherce as ny as ever he can,*
> *Everich a word, if it be in his charge,*
> *Al speke he never so rudeliche and large.*"

Consequently he lets the Miller tell on freely his "cherles tale;" nor does he hold the rein on the Miller's coarser fellows. Many of these stories, that "sownen unto" a now decorously covered sin, are

[1] *Nun's Priest's Tale*, ll. 343ff.

quite redeemed by the brilliancy and humor of the telling. Chaucer is too much the artist to be coarse for coarseness' sake, and often lends a special refinement of manner to matter sufficiently dubious. Yet the reader of no too squeamish taste will find certain parts of these tales obtrusively nasty. Nor can he wholly excuse the poet on the ground of old-time freedom of expression; for Chaucer knew perfectly well what he was about in treating the Somnour as realistically as he did the Prioress: the choice and the responsibility were his alone. It is, however, fair to say that such work is small in amount, and to the average reader a negligible quantity. The closer student will condemn this portion of his work, or hold it justified, according to his opinion of the realistic doctrine; while those who have experienced some of life's compromises will be rather tolerant toward one whose "gipoun," unlike that of the Knight, bears stains other than those of the crusader's "habergeoun."

Supremely inventive Chaucer proved himself just once — in the *Prologue* and the plan of the *Canterbury Tales*. Elsewhere he prefers to rest upon the authority of other men, and to use his great literary powers in the re-shaping and bringing to perfection of well-known stories. He possibly never invented a plot, and when, as in the *Hous of Fame*, he lacked a direct model, the story quite ran away with him. Pillaging literature with a freedom that reminds us of Shakespeare digging *Macbeth* out of a chronicle, or transforming a popular novel into *As You Like It*, Chaucer now borrowed the plot of an Italian epic, now used a Latin tale of Petrarch's, now re-wrote a French

fableau; or again a legend of Ovid, or an "example" from a monkish compilation was his theme.

But everything he borrowed became speedily his own. The *Knight's Tale* emerged a very different thing from the *Teseide;* Boccaccio would have recognized only with difficulty in *Troilus* his *Filostrato.* Even in those cases where he follows an original closely, the grace of the telling, the picturesqueness and genial humor which permeate the old material transmute it into another and far finer substance. Every one knows that inventiveness is the smallest part of the story-teller's gift. The most indifferent tale may be redeemed by the resources of the narrator's art; the most ingenious spoiled through inadequate telling. So the story-teller's business lies chiefly in presentation, very little in absolute invention. *Or dient et content et fabloient,* "Now they say and relate and tell the tale," stands at the chapter-heads of that blithest of early stories, *Aucassin and Nicolette.* Let this artless redundancy of words for telling indicate that therein lies the whole opus and labor of a difficult art. So a man tell his story supremely well, be he a Chaucer, an Ariosto, a Lafontaine, the question, "Where did he get it?" troubles little the reader. He is foolish who seeks too narrowly the antecedents of bookish treasure-trove. 'T is the bookworm's, not the gentle reader's part. And be it said that such rummaging among Chaucer's "olde bokes" only illustrates his genius. Many-sided as is his genius, he must be judged, or better, enjoyed primarily, as the master of those who tell. In olden times the French trouvère of recognized preëminence received the title of king. So Adenes proudly signs himself *li rois.*

Chaucer had no need to claim a title that posterity has never refused him.

We have found in Chaucer an unusual power of style, the *eloquentia* of the humanist whom Chaucer in temperament often foreshadows. And here be it said that when Matthew Arnold denied to him the possession of the "grand style," he spoke from imperfect knowledge or appreciation. As well deny this gift to Horace because he prefers the note of comedy. To style in the narrower sense Chaucer adds extraordinary descriptive power, dealing however rather in the significant line than in the elaborated study. Finally, the texture of his invention is undershot with a humor peculiarly genial and humane. The result is a style unequalled for ease and charm. This naturalness has frequently passed for *naïveté*. There could be no greater mistake. The great poets have no "wood-notes wild," and Chaucer is of their company, *della loro schiera*.

It is, I believe, the supreme ease of his poetry that gives him his unique position among English poets. Certain it is that no other poet of the first rank gives so much, requiring of the reader so little effort in return. And this ease lies deeper than facts of style and methods of composition; it comes from a nature finely adjusted to the world in which it finds itself. When we think of the man Chaucer we are inevitably reminded of the Horace of the *Satires* and *Epistles*. We divine a man who has loved the world much, not wholly trusting it, who knows tears but prefers smiles. We recognize an experience, mellowing where embitterment were possible, which has yielded worldly wis-

dom of the most amiable sort. It is these qualities that make Chaucer of all our poets the friendliest.

V

PRONUNCIATION AND METRE

PRONUNCIATION.[1] No one can read the first three lines of *The Prologue* without asking the question, "How is this to be pronounced?" If he pronounce as in modern English, —

"And bath'd every vein in such líquor" —

he clearly has something that is not verse at all; if, retaining the modern pronunciation, he sound such extra syllables as appear to be required by the verse, he has something that assuredly is neither old nor modern English; while he will encounter the further difficulty that a good half the rimes are false: in the first six lines he must rime "liquor — flower" and "breath — heath." No cross-roads poet could do worse than this, and Chaucer, one of our greatest artists in verse, can have written nothing of the sort. Since Chaucer pronounced our way is not Chaucer at all, we must learn to read his verse as he read it himself; nor is this so difficult as it would seem, for the research of our own time has determined very accurately the pronunciation of Chaucer's English. A few simple rules, which avoid all minute or merely

[1] This section is simplified to the last degree. Naturally such vowels as e and o had other pronunciations than those here indicated. These refinements can hardly concern the average reader. The special student of Chaucer's language will not need to be directed to Skeat, Ellis, and Ten Brink.

technical points, will enable the student to read Chaucer's verse with pleasure; and the general reader cannot be too strongly urged to read aloud from the first.

I. ACCENTED VOWELS. In general the vowels are pronounced as in French.

a as in f*a*ther, never as in fl*a*t.

e long, often written **ee**, as the vowel in f*a*te.

e short, as in g*e*t.

i, y, as the vowel in f*ee*t.

o long, often written **oo**, as in abode.

o short, as in s*o*n, but before *gt* as in b*ough*t.

u, ew, as in French, *nature*, German ü; rarely as in s*u*ch.

DIPHTHONGS. **ai, ay**, and **ei, ey**, as in str*ai*ght.

au, aw, as in n*ow*.

ou, ow, as in thr*ough*; but **ought** as in b*ough*t.

II. UNACCENTED VOWELS are pronounced usually like accented.

e final has the sound of a in comm*a*; this e when printed should always be pronounced, except when elided for metrical reasons (see Sec. VI.).

A few words drop the e arbitrarily, morë or mor', haddë or hadd', werë or wer', woldë or wold', sholdë or shold', all' or rarely (except in rime) allë.

III. CONSONANTS. Consonants may be pronounced as in modern English, except that **r** should be strongly trilled, and **h** and **g** followed by a consonant sounded like German **ch** in *bach* or *ich*, according to the nature of the preceding vowel.

IV. VERSIFICATION. All the selections in this volume are written in five-stressed lines rimed in couplets.

(*a*) The line normally consists of ten syllables, or eleven when the rime is double, and the even syllables usually bear the stresses: —

"At nýght was cóm intó that hóstelrýe."
Prol. l. 23.

"A Knýght ther wás, and thát a wórthy mán."
Ibid. l. 43.

(*b*) But the stress frequently falls on the first instead of the second syllable, with the effect of emphasizing the first word, —

"*Rédy* to wénden ón my pílgrimáge."
Ibid. l. 21.

The same liberty is permitted after the pause, —

"Troúthe and honoúr, *frédom* and cúrteisýe."
Ibid. l. 46.

This we speak of as inverted stress, for the usual order of unaccented and accented syllable is transposed.

V. NINE-SYLLABLE VERSES. The initial unaccented syllable may fail entirely, in which case we may say that the first foot consists of a single stressed syllable: [1] —

"Ál | besmótered wíth his hábergeoún."
Ibid. l. 76.

"Twén|ty boókes clád in blák and réd."
Ibid. l. 294.

Rarely the unaccented syllable following the pause may be lacking: —

[1] Such lines are indicated in the text by the accent on the initial syllable.

"passed were also
Syn Márch bigán thírty dáyes and twó."
Nun's Priest's Tale, l. 369.

And probably: —

"As séyde hymsélf móre than á curát."
Prologue, l. 219.

For we should hardly read *morë*.

VI. ELISION OF FINAL **e**. When final e is followed by a word beginning with a vowel, a pronoun beginning with h, the verb *have* and a few other words beginning with h, the e is not counted in the verse, — is suppressed by elision. It is a question whether such elided e's were entirely unpronounced, or whether they were touched lightly and carried over as a glide to the following vowel. The reader will do best to omit them entirely.

Examples: the elided e is printed in italic: —

"Wel coúde he sítte on hórs and faíre ríde."
Prol. l. 94.

"Thertó he coúde endíte, and máke a thýng."
Ib. l. 325.

"Lat évery félawe télle his tále aboúte."
Knight's Tale, l. 890.

VII. WORD-ACCENT. (*a*) Many words of French origin accent now one, now another syllable, according to the requirement of the metre: so hónour or honoúr, lábour or laboúr, náture or natúre: —

"So priketh them natúre in hir corages."
Prologue, l. 11.

"And certeinly ther náture wol nat wirche."
Knight's Tale, l. 1902.

(*b*) Participles and verbal nouns in **-yng, -ynge, are** accented now on the stem, now on the ending, —

"Sýngyng he was or flóytyng al the day."
Prologue, l. 91.

"Ther as this Emily hadde hir pleyínge."
Knight's Tale, l. 203.

(*c*) As in modern verse, final syllables containing an *l* or *r* are readily slurred. Thus: *heaven* or *heav'n*, *ever* or *ev'r*, *evil* or *ev'l*, *lytel* or *lyt'l*, etc. Words ending in *-we* also slur the ending; so *sorwe*, *morwe*, *borwe*, are usually monosyllables with Chaucer.

The ending **-ye**, when in rime, has two fully pronounced syllables, **-ýë**: —

"A Frankeleyn was in his compaignýë;
Whit was his berd, as is the dayesýë."
Prologue, l. 332.

Otherwise the final e is silent.

VIII. Extra Syllables. Usually two unaccented syllables may not stand together (see, however, IV., *b*), but two syllables rapidly pronounced may be regarded for metrical purposes as one, —

"With a thredbare cópe as ís a póvre scolér."
Prologue, l. 260.

In a large class of words we have the option of suppressing a syllable (see VII., *c*), or of pronouncing a light extra syllable.

IX. These few hints must suffice. In the long run the student must depend on his own ear in reading Chaucer's verse; and the example of a teacher, who pronounces the lines accurately and sympathetically, will do more to start the beginner aright than would pages of elaborate analysis. The appended

lines from the *Prologue*, with the verse accents marked, may be of service. Naturally the reader will not fall into the error of regarding all the stressed syllables as of equal value. Unimportant words like "with," l. 1, and "to," l. 2, bear a very light stress. The symbols are as follows: ë for e as a syllable, *e* for silent e, ⏑ two syllables for one. Lines 1 and 8 might be read with the first stress on the second syllable, though the scansion indicated seems preferable. The voice really hesitates between two syllables, and this is what the poet meant it should do: —

"Whán that Aprílle with his shóurës sótë
The dróghte of Márche hath pércëd tó the rótë,
And báthëd évery véyne in swích licóur,
Of whích vertú engéndrëd ís the flóur;
Whan Zéphirús eek with his swéte bréeth
Inspírëd háth in évery hólt and héeth
The téndrë cróppës, ánd the yóngë sónnë
Háth in the Rám his hálfë cóurs y-rónnë,
And smálë fówlës máken mélodyë,
That slépen ál the nýght with ópen yë,
(So príketh hém natúre in hír corágës):
Than lóngen fólk to góon on pílgrymágës,
And pálmers fór to séken stráungë stróndës,
To férnë hálwës, cóuthe in sóndry lóndës;
And spécially, from évery shírës éndë
Of Éngëlónd, to Cáunterbúry they wéndë,
The hóly blísful mártir fór to sékë,
That hém hath hólpen, whán that thév were séekë."

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

Texts. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, edited by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, Oxford, 1894, f°, 6 vols., with a supplementary volume of *Chaucerian and Other Pieces*. This splendid edition will probably

long remain standard. The reader will find it a treasure-house of information on all matters Chaucerian, and usually a competent guide to the literature of the subject. —— The *Student's Chaucer*, Macmillan and Co., London and New York, 1895. This book is a convenient reprint in one volume of Professor Skeat's text. A concise introduction contains complete annals of Chaucer's life and valuable observations upon his works and language. —— The *Globe Chaucer*, edited by Alfred W. Pollard and three associate editors, Macmillan and Co., 1898. This is, on the whole, the most convenient of the recent editions. It lacks an account of Chaucer's metre and pronunciation, but contains useful notes, and, though necessarily in small type, is clearly and handsomely printed.

The well-known text-books, begun by Richard Morris and continued by Professor Skeat, at the Clarendon Press, were long the great repository of Chaucerian information, and, if they have been in part superseded, it is by Professor Skeat himself in the monumental "Oxford Chaucer." They are still indispensable to the minute student who is unfortunate enough not to have the "Oxford Chaucer" at hand.

Criticism. The best study of Chaucer's personality remains that of Lowell, originally published in the volume, *My Study Windows*, later in the *Literary Essays*, vol. iv., in the collected edition, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Boston. The same writer's immature but charming *Conversations on the Old Poets*, 1845, though excluded by Lowell's wish from the collected edition (reprinted by David McKay, Philadelphia, 1893), is admirable, in spite of a certain diffuseness,

for its tone of frank appreciation. The chapter on Chaucer in Jusserand's *A Literary History of the English People*, Putnam, London and New York, 1895, combines to a rare degree scholarship and literary quality. I know of no recent work at once so suggestive and useful. For the mature reader, Ten Brink's chapters on Chaucer in *The History of English Literature* (English translation, Holt, New York; Bell, London), will prove particularly valuable. It is the most searching analysis yet made of Chaucer's art. Professor Lounsbury's *Studies in Chaucer* (3 vols., New York, Harper, 1892), are so entertaining that one is likely to overlook their real erudition. Every earnest student should read at least the essay on Chaucer's Learning, in the second volume. These books, with Professor Skeat's great edition, contain sufficient bibliography to start the ambitious student in his first investigations.

THE CANTERBURY TALES

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE PROLOGUE

THE opening lines of the *Prologue* set us in the very heart of an English springtime; we know that buds are bursting, and hear the song of birds. The "spring fret" is at least as old as Chaucer. In such a season the mind looks toward pilgrimage, either over sea, or, nearer at hand, through sixty miles of Kentish field and pasture to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury. This was already a venerable pilgrimage in Chaucer's time. Immediately after Thomas à Becket had been slain in his own cathedral of Canterbury, — the year was 1170, — miracles were wrought at his tomb; and when four years later Pope Alexander III. canonized the martyr archbishop, Canterbury had already become a pilgrimage shrine. This it remained until Henry VIII. and the Reformation in 1538 desecrated the shrine and scattered the ashes of the saint.

Just before this time the great scholar Erasmus visited the sanctuary, and described[1] with fine and cautious irony the mummeries he there saw. It was with no such feeling, but with perfect faith in the saint that Chaucer crossed London bridge, and leaving the double row of shops and the great bridge tower

[1] In the latter part of the Colloquy, *Peregrinatio Religionis Ergo.*

behind turned down the Thames a few paces to the Tabard inn. Here the poet finds twenty-nine[1] English men and women, likewise bound for St. Thomas's shrine.

In the course of the evening Chaucer has met them all, and is ready to render an account of his fellow-pilgrims to the reader. He seems to take them as they catch his eye in the guest room of the Tabard, for the recurring "ther was" means "there at the inn;" but immediately his mind passes out of the inn to the pilgrims' road, and sets in motion that marvellous cavalcade which it shall be our pleasure to review. Here is no order of precedence; Chaucer expressly denies any intention of observing social distinctions. Haphazard, as chance or personal preference dictate, the pilgrims pass, and yet in such order as to lend infinite variety to their progress.

First a Knight well-mounted, but bearing the stains of battle for our faith; sage in council and brave in fight, the very prototype of the sturdy, unassuming English gentleman. His son follows caracoling after, a ladies' man, a writer of verse, a dandy in his way, but a dandy who has given and taken hard knocks in the Low Countries. You may find his like on our warships and in colonial posts. Their single attendant is close behind, a stupid, faithful, crop-headed yeoman. Bow and beautifully kept tackle show him a woods-

[1] With the Prioress's "prestes thre" (l. 164), the pilgrims count up to thirty-one, which is inconsistent with the

"*Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye*"

of l. 24. Only one of these priests appears as a story-teller, so that Chaucer may have set down "thre" provisionally for the rime, intending to change it later.

man. Well may the king's deer thank the Knight for taking this fellow out of the greenwood.

Behind this group rides the lady Prioress, with her little retinue of a female chaplain and three priests. The Prioress has all the airs and graces of the mistress of a girls' "finishing school;" the neatness of her dress, a certain affectation of speech show that she makes a profession of fine-ladyship. For all that she must be a little distressed to find herself in such mixed company, she is sincerely courteous to her companions of the road. We must believe that she rides by preference near so thoroughly respectable a person as the Knight, while she surely looks askance at the ribald Friar who rides close behind her.

It would be useless to call the roll of the Canterbury pilgrimage. Cast rather a glance along the line and rest content with what that glance tells. A Franklin, white-bearded, florid, and in holiday attire, radiates an atmosphere of good wine and good cheer. A little group of London tradesmen wear their handsome gild livery rather consciously. They stick close together, and talk shop even on pilgrimage. A bearded Shipman with a half-piratical air jolts past uneasily on a cart-horse. The fat and merry Wife of Bath, experienced pilgrim that she is, rides astride in a capacious pair of leggings, and, as she rides, jokes and quarrels loudly with the whole company.

Note well the pair that follows. That quiet, sad-faced man bears the sins and sorrows of a whole countryside, and bears them patiently and gladly for his Lord's sake. The man riding at his side resembles him, but his face lacks the finer lines of thought, and his back is bent with toil in the fields, toil as often

rendered to his neighbor as to himself. So we interpret his rugged, kindly face.

That our procession lack not contrast, a precious pack of rascals follows these godly men. A Miller, redly hirsute, squat, muscular, and misshapen, the terror of his region, and yet, if you are not too nice in your taste, a right merry comrade. If you could n't see him, you might hear him, for the reed of a bagpipe sticks in his red spade-beard, and his left arm squeezes the bellows against his white and floury coat. Next, two thin, sly figures, a Manciple, the tricky caterer of an Inn of Court; and the Reeve, steward of a large landed estate. The latter longest holds our attention. All bones and wrinkles, the furtive look in his eye curiously belied by the flash that tells of a temper badly controlled, you feel that he is as dangerous as he is shifty, and you know not whether to pity most the young lord he fleeces, or the fellow-knaves he terrorizes. He rides last of all, that he may see and not be seen, while the only pleasant touch in his portrait is the background, a tidy farm house shadowed with "grene trees." The Somnour who rides in this group is hideous to the eye as to the mind. Under a flower garland, his face shines roughly with all manner of repulsive humors; he swings drunkenly on his horse, and balances a great cake bucklerwise. His deep voice silences in a moment all other talk. Children shrink from his path. Truly this is a figure worthy of his trade. Informer and prosecutor for ecclesiastical courts, his business requires that he should know how Tom stands with Kate, that he should learn and report what evil Diccon has said of his priest. He lives by blackmail; the evil men do is his bread of life;

and yet the neighborhood drinks with him, and fearfully votes him a good fellow. The Pardoner, on the contrary, is smooth and plausible, a cheerful rascal, who knows his own rascality and enjoys it. His relics are naught, but they serve as well as if they were true. A fine actor, an eloquent preacher withal, people pay gladly for his pardons wherever he goes; and, if certain faithful parish priests see their work of years undone, their authority discredited, and their tithes pouring into the Pardoner's bag, why, a man must live, and the stupid must go to the wall. Such is the Pardoner's philosophy, as he simpers and smiles at his fellows and smooths his yellow locks.

With the Pardoner, Chaucer takes leave of his pilgrims on the road and returns to the Tabard inn. The host makes his proposition[1] for the journey and the telling of the tales, and the guests, readily assenting, sleep soundly in preparation for a long and tiresome ride. In the pilgrimage itself we shall come to know the host better, and recognize his almost ideal capacity for his calling. He shows already a certain tact in selecting the Knight, Prioress, and Clerk to begin the story-telling; for they are, two of them, the highest-born, and the third the most learned, of the company, and he feels confident that any one of them will tell a "noble storie," and thus inaugurate worthily the *Canterbury Tales*. Later we shall find that it is he who has a sharp word, an oath if necessary, for the ribald or quarrelsome; an effective note of protest for the lengthy and tedious; finally, the most exquisite courtesy and deference for "the gen-

[1] That each of the thirty pilgrims should tell two tales going and two coming (*Prol.* ll. 799 ff.). For this plan in detail, and its subsequent modification, see p. xxx f.

tles." Hear him as he prays the lady Prioresse to tell her tale: —

> "*My lady Prioresse, by youre leve,*
> *So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greve,*
> *I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde*
> *A tale next, if so were that ye wolde.*
> *Now wol ye vouchesauf, my lady deere?*"[1]

Never, to my knowledge, has our downright English tongue been more deferential. No wonder the lady Prioresse smiled and said "Gladly," and added her sweetly pathetic tale to the romance and broad mirth of the day.

So, in a few lines, Chaucer has introduced us to our comrades of the Canterbury pilgrimage. We have actually seen them all; we know what manner of men and women they are, and our curiosity is whetted for the varied entertainment they are to furnish.

There is nothing just like the *Prologue* in literature. There are no other seven hundred lines that offer so many pictures, so vivid and so true. Nor should we let the ease, almost the carelessness, of Chaucer's manner mislead us as to the difficulty of his task and the greatness of his achievement. Place yourself as nearly as you may in his position, endeavor to make another see and understand the score of people who were your railway companions yesterday, and you will find through failure that these apparently random touches of color, these mere hints at character in which the *Prologue* abounds, require the finest observation and the supremest selective art. No one, not excepting Shakespeare, has shown us so clearly the faces of men, enabling us, at a single penetrating glance, to detect the self that these faces at once mask and reveal.

[1] *Cant. T.* B. ll. 1637ff.

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

IT was Boccaccio who first told the story of the rival cousins and brothers-in-arms in his *Teseide*.[1] It appears that he invented the main plot, the fatal rivalry of Palamon and Arcite, but used as historical setting for his epic the story of Theseus, founder of Athens, and the sanguinary tale of the fall of the Theban dynasty. In this latter he naturally borrowed freely from Statius's picturesque, if overwrought, *Thebaid*. Boccaccio's poem achieved an immediate success. Its obvious defects were scarcely felt by a fourteenth-century audience, while its copious eloquence and abounding color gave it readers and publishers as late as Ariosto and the full renaissance.

When Chaucer first went to Italy in 1372, the *Teseide* had been read for more than a score of years, yet it appears that Chaucer did not know the book until his second Italian journey of 1378. We have already seen that the story was not written in the first instance for the Knight. Chaucer, after the completion of *Troilus*, planned first to write *Anelida*, using the setting only of the *Teseide;* but, as he wrote, the work grew upon him, so that he abandoned the smaller task, and set about rendering the whole plot of Boccaccio's poem into English.[2] *Palamon*

[1] I cite in the notes and elsewhere the edition of Moutier, Firenze, 1831.

[2] For a discussion of the inception and date of the *Knight's Tale*, see above, p. xvii.

and Arcite,[1] as Chaucer himself called his new poem, is essentially an abstract of Boccaccio's epic, but it is far from being merely that. The nature of the condensation and the character of the changes are so instructive, as to the English poet's methods of composition, that we shall delay a few moments in their study.

LA TESEIDE.[2]	THE KNIGHT'S TALE.
The poem opens with an invocation to the Muses, Mars and Venus.	
I. 1104 ll. Teseo learns of the cruelty of the Amazons toward their men; leads a great army to Scythia; conquers their queen Ippolita; and ends the siege and the war by leading her back to Athens as his queen, with her fair sister Emilia.	All this is related briefly in one ninth of the space, ll. 1–174.
II. 972 ll. As Teseo rides in triumph toward Athens, certain Theban women, bereft of husbands and lovers through the cruelty of the tyrant Creon, beseech the conqueror for vengeance and for relief. Teseo takes up their cause, slays Creon, routing his army. Among	This story of the Theban women and of the battle occupies, in brief résumé, ll. 35–174.

[1] See *Legende of Good Women*, Prol. l. 420.

[2] In this running analysis of the *Teseide*, the use of italic indicates that Chaucer either omitted or changed materially the portion of the plot so printed. Thus the general relations of the two poems are presented at a glance. The right-hand column contains brief notes on Chaucer's use of the Italian material, displaying as well the original matter introduced by him.

the Theban captives are Palemon and Arcita.

III. 680 ll. The two cousins languish in prison, till one morning when Emilia gathers roses and sings beneath their window. *Arcita, hearing her, looks out and believes he sees Venus herself. He calls Palemon, who is smitten by the same passion, and together the two captives vie with each other in the praise of their common lady. Emilia, perceiving that she is observed, runs away. She returns, however, other mornings; and as the two cousins fall more deeply in love with her an unexpressed jealousy arises between them.* One day Peritoo, an old friend of Arcita, visits Teseo, and begs for the release of his comrade. This Teseo grants upon condition that Arcita shall forever leave the country. The two cousins part in tears, each envying the other's lot; and Arcita rides sadly out of Athens followed by a pitying glance from Emilia.

Chaucer here departs frequently from his original, adopting a more abrupt treatment. Emily appears but once to the two cousins. From that moment they are avowed rivals. The story thus loses something in delicacy of analysis, but gains in naturalness.

Chaucer makes Palamon see Emily first. The change is of slight importance, but good in that it gives the successful lover a certain prior claim to her in the mind of the reader.

There is but little translation in this portion of the *Knight's Tale*. The description of Emily walking in the garden comes quite directly from Boccaccio, and certain features of the dispute of Palamon and Arcite are transferred to this place from the fifth book of *La Teseide*.

IV. 728 ll. Arcita, after seeing the ruin of Thebes, *passes some time forlornly among old friends*, returns disguised to Athens and enters Teseo's service under the name of *Penteo*. Here at least he may see Emilia, while he unburdens his love-laden heart in solitary

All this is condensed into about a hundred lines, 497–603. Arcite returns under the name of Philostrate (see l. 570, note). The part of the Squire is entirely lacking.

walks through field and wood. *There one day he is overheard and recognized by Panfilo, Palemon's squire, who carries the word to his master in prison.*

V. 840 ll. *Palemon is distressed at hearing of the return of Arcite.* He manages to escape from prison *by changing clothes with his doctor,* and surprises Arcita in the woods. *The cousins greet one another affectionately and present their respective claims to the hand of Emilia. Unable to decide the matter thus,* they arrange *reluctantly* to fight it out in mortal combat. Arcita returns to fetch arms for both; and they are fighting desperately as the hunt of Teseo draws by. The king separates them. *First Arcita confesses his real name; then Palemon.* Teseo, marvelling at the power of love, and remembering his own youthful follies, pardons them their offence against his law, and decrees that they shall return at the end of a year, each with a hundred knights, to settle their quarrel by mortal combat.

Palamon escapes by drugging his jailer, and, overhearing Arcite talk aloud of his love for Emily, defies him. The challenge is accepted without debate. They fight silently (see l. 791, note).

Thus the meeting of the rivals in the woods becomes merely casual, but gains immensely in dramatic effect, while by the omission of all parleying between the ~~cousins~~ the ~~narrative~~ gains swiftness and realism.

The very natural touch where Palamon confesses to Theseus that he deserves death, but, as a jealous man, insists that Arcite suffer with him, is Chaucer's own.

Although now in the very heart of his story, Chaucer uses less than half (ll. 604–1022) the verses Boccaccio needs for this part of the narrative.

VI. 568 ll. *For a year the two rivals live together in harmony amid all manner of feasting and revelry.* Toward the appointed time their champions gather from all quarters, *and the poet*

Chaucer describes here the building of a noble theatre, — in the *Teseide* no special theatre is built for the occasion, — taking the descriptions of the temples of Mars[1] and Venus from bk.

[1] It appears that in this description of the temple of Mars,

names no less than twoscore of them, often describing them elaborately and enumerating their possessions. Teseo, the queen, and Emilia receive them courteously, and the time passes to the tournament in solace and in mirth.

vii, where they are not, properly speaking, in the poem, but are merely seen by the personified prayers of the rival kinsmen. The oratory of Diana is either invented by Chaucer, or its details are drawn from some other unknown source.

Instead of describing the

Chaucer has had recourse to Boccaccio's model, Statius. I print for comparison with *Knight's Tale*, ll. 1123–60, Lewis's translation of the *Thebaid*, viii. 59–84 : —

> " *Beneath the fronting height of Aemus stood*
> *The fane of Mars, encompass'd by a wood.*
> *The mansion, rear'd by more than mortal hands,*
> *On columns fram'd of polish'd iron stands :*
> *The well-compacted walls are plated o'er*
> *With the same metal : just without the door*
> *A thousand furies frown. The dreadful gleam,*
> *That issues from the sides, reflects the beam*
> *Of adverse Phœbus, and with cheerless light*
> *Saddens the day, and starry host of night.*
> *Well his attendants suit the dreary place :*
> *First frantic Passion, Wrath with redd'ning face,*
> *And Mischief blind from forth the threshold start ;*
> *Within lurks pallid Fear with quiv'ring heart,*
> *Discord, a two-edged faulchion in her hand,*
> *And Treach'ry striving to conceal the brand.*
> *With endless menaces the courts resound :*
> *Sad Valour in the midst maintains her ground ;*
> *Rage with a joyful heart, tho' short of breath,*
> *And, arm'd with steel, the gory-visaged Death :*
> *Blood, spilt in war alone, his altars crowns,*
> *And all his fire is snatch'd from burning towns.*
> *Spoils hang around, and gaudy trophies torn*
> *From vanquish'd state the vaulted roof adorn :*
> *Fragments of iron gates with art ingrav'd,*
> *Vessels half-burnt, or by the billows stav'd,*
> *Sculls crush'd by wheels, or by keen faulchions cleft,*
> *And chariots of their guides and steeds bereft.*"

Chaucer has elsewhere used the *Thebaid ;* see Skeat's notes to A. 883 (25), A. 1990 (132), and perhaps A. 2743 (1885ff.). Boccaccio constantly translates the *Thebaid*, so that it is often difficult in a given case to determine whether Boccaccio or Statius is Chaucer's model. Only the instances given above seem sure.

whole train, Chaucer portrays a single champion from either side. See ll. 1270ff. and 1297ff., notes.

VII. 1160 ll. Before the battle Teseo changes his decree, ordaining that the tournament be fought without loss of life. The contestants are solemnly counted in the theatre, and all is ready for the great day. The morning early, Arcita prays for victory in the temple of Mars. *His prayer speeds away to find Mars in his grim northern temple.* The god sends a sign of victory to Arcita kneeling. *The warrior spends the night in the temple,* assured that his prayer has been granted. In like manner Palemon prays to Venus, not for victory but to possess Emilia. *His prayer flies to the temple of Venus, who receives it graciously.* Strife arises in heaven between Venus and Mars, until the gods find a means of granting both petitions.

Emilia, too, prays in the temple of Diana that she may remain a maiden, or if the gods decree otherwise, that she may marry him who best loves her, without peril to the vanquished lover. The fires on Diana's altar indicate darkly that Arcita is to conquer, but that Palemon is to have Emilia.

Teseo with all his court comes

Here Chaucer rejects the personification of the dreams, but otherwise follows his original closely, translating the greater part of the three prayers.

to the great theatre. *Palemon and Arcita, addressing their vows silently to Emilia, exhort their followers to fight valiantly.* All await tremulously the *third and* final signal for the charge.

VIII. 1048 ll. The battle is fiercely fought; the advantage now with one side, now with the other; *and the poet describes minutely the single combats. Emilia regrets bitterly the blood shed for her sake. As they slacken for sheer exhaustion, Mars descends under the form of Teseo, and urges Arcita with bitter words to the attack.* In the mêlée Palemon is *desperately wounded in the arm by a man-eating stallion, and, thus disabled,* dragged out of the fight and disarmed. Emilia's smile rewards the victor as he makes the circuit of the lists.

The brilliant description of the battle owes practically nothing to Boccaccio. The Italian poet endeavors to describe the exact order of events; Chaucer, ~~much more vividly, to describe~~ only the general confusion of the mêlée.

Palamon is merely ~~overcome~~ by the force of numbers and dragged "unto the stake," l. 1784.

IX. 664 ll. As Arcita rides in triumph, a hideous fury sent by Venus from Pluto's realm enters the arena bearing terror with her. The horse of the victor starts, and, as it falls, crushes its master cruelly against the pommel of the saddle. *Arcita recovers sufficiently to take part in a splendid triumph, and, thus wounded, surrounded by his warriors and followed by his captives, the triumphal car bears him back to*

The manuscripts differ between a "fury" and merely a flash of "fire" (see l. 1826, note), and the incident is much condensed.

Chaucer omits the triumph, it seems to me with good reason; for it presents the dying victor in no very magnanimous light. Nor is there any mention of the wedding of Arcite and Emily, — a skilful suppression; for no one wishes to feel that she

Athens. Teseo awards praise impartially to victors and vanquished, *and celebrates splendidly the espousals of Arcita and Emilia. Even Palemon accepts his evil fortune with the finest knightly courtesy.*

X. 896 ll. The bodies of those slain in the tournament are burned. Of the wounded, all but Arcita recover. Feeling his injuries are mortal, *he calls Teseo to his bedside, and, reviewing the whole history of his love, renounces in Palemon's favor all claim to Emilia. Likewise he calls Palemon and charges him to win and marry Emilia;* while upon her he lays as his dying request the duty of loving Palemon. So, with bitter weeping of his new-won bride, with the praises of all in his ears, Arcita dies.

XI. 728 ll. *The soul of Arcita mounts up to the eighth heaven, whence it looks down with pity* upon the weeping made for him below. Wise words but half heard of old Egeo comfort a little the mourners. A noble pyre arises for Arcita, and his body is burned with all the rites of a classic funeral. On the following day there was racing of horses, boxing with the cestus, and discus-throwing, for splendid prizes. *Above the ashes of*

passes to Palamon as Arcite's widow. This condensation carries us swiftly to the bedside of Arcite. It is there that we would be, and Boccaccio's triumphs and feasts only detain us annoyingly.

All this is more simply treated by Chaucer, and more affectingly. Arcite sends directly for Emily and Palamon, and with no parade of generosity, no embarrassing insistence, only suggests to Emily: —

> *" . . . if that ever ye shal been a wyf*
> *Forget nat Palamon, the gentil man."*
> l. 1938.

I know of no instance where Chaucer's fineness of nature appears more clearly than it does in this passage.

The apotheosis of Arcite is rejected by Chaucer (see l. 1951, note).

The description of the funeral is much abridged and the tedious and quite purposeless recapitulation is omitted.

the pyre Palemon had built a temple to Juno, in which the ashes of Arcita should be eternally honored. This temple bore in its decoration the whole story of Arcita, practically a recapitulation of the entire poem.

XII. 688 ll. *After several days* Teseo and the assembly of the Greeks decree that mourning shall cease with the wedding of Palemon and Emilia. *With some difficulty their scruples are overcome,* and the wedding feast is celebrated joyously. All render honor to Venus for bringing the two lovers together at last.

The author invokes the Muses and bids farewell to his poem.

"Certeyn yeres" elapse before the marriage of Palamon and Emily. The speech of Theseus is greatly expanded, chiefly through the insertion of passages from Boethius [1] (see ll. 2129ff. notes, *passim*). Other tedious descriptive passages, such as an inventory of Emily's charms, Tes. xii. 53–63, and a long account of the wedding feast are omitted; and the knight hastens on to his

"*God save alle this faire compaignye.*'

This somewhat minute comparison of texts will serve only to emphasize Chaucer's independence and originality. When we have seen how freely he omits, modifies, and transposes the material before him, we shall be prepared for the interesting statistical results furnished by Mr. A. W. Ward's close study of the two poems, namely, that the 10,176 lines of the *Teseide* furnished only 270 for direct translation, only 374 for general imitation. That is, a quarter of the text of the *Knight's Tale* depends more or less di-

[1] Another instance of the use of Boethius is l. 392. (See note.) Chaucer dragged into *Troilus*, none too happily, large portions of the *Consolations*. Probably he was amplifying that poem for the worse at about the time, 1381–82, of the composition of the *Knight's Tale*.

rectly upon its original. This quarter is in the main confined to descriptive passages, such as the account of the temples of Mars and of Venus, and to the prayers which Palamon, Arcite, and Emily make to their patrons before the great tournament. For these brilliant, ornamental passages Chaucer is distinctly indebted to Boccaccio; the main body of the work, the narrative proper, is to be reckoned only for the English poet.

But the *Knight's Tale* is much more than a condensation and re-arrangement of the *Teseide*; the whole intention and tone of the story have changed in Chaucer's hands. Boccaccio is trying to write an epic poem; to lend, by stately accessory, abundance of figure, and elaborately developed description, epic dignity to the romantic situation, which is his main theme. This very abundance and richness of description has only obscured the main issue, so that most readers will concur in the judgment of Gaspary (*Hist. of Ital. Lit.*, Italian ed., ii. 93): "The epic plan, with its prolixity and its pretentious ornamentation, has spoiled the poem, which is almost solely made up of very long speeches and descriptions." Chaucer immediately swept away this tawdry epic ornament, and reduced the story to its true proportions as a romance of chivalry. In his treatment the story gains realism and loses slightly in delicacy. Palamon and Arcite are no longer the ideal friends who share willingly a hopeless love; they are red-blooded young men, who are jealous from the first and fight it out at the earliest opportunity. The action of the poem sweeps on without interruption, allowing only the absolutely necessary breathing spaces before the great

fight and after the death of Arcite; and it is this splendid swiftness of the narrative that constitutes one of its chief attractions.

The character of Theseus becomes an important element in Chaucer's handling of the plot. From a character vaguely sketched, a mere king, he becomes the smiling providence of the romance. It is he whose ironical, though always genial, comment sets things in their true relations; and it is his disillusioned good sense that twice disentangles a snarl of generous cross purposes. He plays nobly that rôle of chorus to the drama, which in *Troilus* we have seen Pandarus play ignobly, if with equal humor.

The interest of the romance centres about the rival cousins. Sworn brothers,[1] a fatal passion makes them enemies. Their hatred and their love are alike impotent: fate deals capriciously, to the one, death in the hour of triumph; to the other, his lady love only after much sorrow. This strife, then, between brotherhood and love is the real subject of the poem, and whatever there is of gorgeous description and exciting

[1] The nature of this knightly bond is well illustrated by a citation from the famous romance of *Amis and Amiloun* (ed. Kölbing, ll. 145ff.).

> *"On a day þe childer war & wiȝt*
> *Trewepes togider þai gan pliȝt,*
> *While þai miȝt liue and stond,*
> *þat hope bi day & bi niȝt*
> *In wele & wo, in wrong & riȝt,*
> *þat þai schuld frely fond,*
> *To hold togider at euerí nede,*
> *In word, in werk, in wille, in dede*
> *Where þat þai were in lond,*
> *Fro þat day forward neuer mo*
> *Failen oþer for wele no wo:*
> *þer to þai held vp her hand."*

The reader may with pleasure consult Pater's analysis of the French *Amis*, in *The Renaissance*.

incident, unequalled as the *Knight's Tale* is in these respects, is only incidental. Pater, in *The Renaissance* (p. 9), has said a fine word in this connection: "Such comradeship, though instances of it are to be found everywhere, is still especially a classical motive; Chaucer expressing the sentiment of it so strongly in an antique tale that one knows not whether the love of both Palamon and Arcite for Emelya, or of these two for each other, is the chiefer subject of the *Knight's Tale.*

> "'*He cast his eyen upon Emelya,*
> *And therwithal he bleynte and cried, ah!*
> *As that he stongen were unto the herte.*'

What reader does not refer part of the bitterness of that cry to the spoiling, already foreseen, of that fair friendship which had hitherto made the prison of the two lads sweet with its daily offices, though that friendship is saved at last?" It is the re-knitting of this friendship in the face of death, and the delicate scruple of Palamon in profiting by Arcite's generosity, — all this suggested rather than fully expressed, — that are among the memorable traits of the book.

And yet at times we feel that it is the beauty or the energy of certain descriptions that stays longest in the memory, — it is Emily gathering her garland at the dawn of May-day; the gigantic champion of Palamon, lumbering into Athens on his bull chariot; the splendor of a great amphitheatre that arose at Theseus' command; the glitter and din of the great tournament, — and certain it is that no other Englishman, not Spenser, not the Laird of Abbotsford even, has pictured so splendidly and vividly the passing show of chivalry, the exaltation of adventure. It is

a story that fills the eye as it does the heart; it were idle to inquire which it most engages.

One criticism will occur to the reader, — the actions and the passions of the poem are much more clearly felt than the persons who act and feel. Emily is scarcely more to us than a radiant vision against a background of rose-trees, — such a gracious picture as the old painters used to call "The Virgin in a Rose-garden." She is lovable we know; but why? We could scarcely tell. Palamon is less headstrong — in Arnold's phrase, more sweetly reasonable — than the impulsive Arcite, yet either of the lovers is very much less a person than, for instance, our friend Chaunte-cleer the cock. It is this lack of reality in the characters that leads one of Chaucer's best critics, M. Jusserand, to say of the *Knight's Tale*: "In opposition to his usual custom, he contents himself here with lending a little life to illuminations of manuscripts;" and the observation is, in the main, just. Yet he would better have said "sufficient" life, for the illusion is complete. No reader will stop to inquire if Emily and her lovers are more or less real than the Wife of Bath and the Miller. Granted that the actors and the scenery might suffer in the cold light of day, it is Geoffrey Chaucer who is stage manager, and he will see to it that a kind light attend the representation. No reader, as he draws his sigh of satisfaction and rises to go, but will applaud in the words of an old scribe (that of the Paris MS.): "Here ends the *Knight's Tale*, and a very good one it is," — *Explicit fabula Militis, valde bona.*

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

LIKE most of the Canterbury Tales, the plot of the story of Chauntecleer and Pertelote is borrowed. The second branch of the French *Roman de Renard* [1]

[1] The story of the cock and the fox had had a long history in literature before it reached Chaucer. The earliest version known is that of a fable collection attributed to one Romulus. I reprint (from Hervieux, *Phèdre et ses Anciens Imitateurs*, ii. 533, ed. 1884) the fable, which appears to be Chaucer's ultimate source.

L. — *DE GALLO ET VULPE.*

Gallus in sterquilinio * *conversabatur; quem Vulpes intuens accessit, et ante illum residens in hæc verba prorupit: Numquam vidi volucrem tibi similem in decore, patre tuo tantum accepto (excepto?). Qui cum altius cantare voluit, oculos claudere consuevit. Gallus igitur, amator laudis, sicut Vulpes docuit, lumina clausit, et alta voce cantare cœpit. Protinus Vulpes, in eum irruens, cantum in tristitiam vertit, raptum cantorem ad nemus deferens properavit. Aderant forte pastores in campo, qui Vulpem profugam canibus et clamoribus insequebantur. Tunc Gallus ait Vulpi: Dicite quod vester sim et quod nichil ad eos spectet* † *rapina ista. Vulpe igitur incipiente loqui, Gallus, elapsus ab ore ipsius, auxilio pennarum mox in arbore summa refugium invenit. Tunc Vulpes ait: Væ sibi qui loquitur, cum melius deberet tacere. Cui Gallus de sublimi respondit: Væ sibi qui claudit oculos, cum potius eos deberet aperire.*

Moralitas. *Non est exigua res suo tempore loqui, et suo tempore reticere; mors enim et vita in manibus linguæ sunt.*

This Latin version was translated toward the close of the 12th century, by Marie de France. See Skeat's *Chaucer* for a metrical translation of this French version, which the editor erroneously regards as one of the sources of the *Nun's Priest's Tale*. The Romulus fable, or one like it, served as the basis for the cock and fox episode of the *Roman de Renard*. Here it was much amplified, gaining the definite setting near a peasant's hovel, the cock's premonitory dream, the character of Pertelote, etc.

* *dunghill.* † *concerns.*

supplied all the elements of the story. The widow's barnyard and cottage, the cock's dream, the trick by which Daun Russel catches him, and the counter-stratagem by which ruffled Chauntecleer finally escapes, — all this is told entertainingly in some five hundred and fifty lines of the French version. The superiority of Chaucer's version lies in its realism and humor. To dwell upon especial features of this

The version of the *Roman* published in the Chaucer Society's *Originals and Analogues* is not Chaucer's exact source, as has been shown by a recent study of the whole matter (*On the Sources of the Nonne Prestes Tale*, by Kate Oelzner Petersen, Radcliffe College Monographs, No. 10, Boston, Ginn and Co., 1898). Miss Petersen finds that Chaucer's source must have been more nearly related to the original of the German *Reinhart Fuchs* than to the existing French version. I must refer the reader to this erudite study, and to a review of it in *Romania*, xxviii. 296, for further particulars.

Miss Petersen suggests that much of the matter concerning dreams may have been borrowed from the commentary *Super Libros Sapientiae*, of the English Dominican Robert Holkot (ob. 1349), and presents interesting parallels between this work and other portions of Chaucer's work. Miss Petersen makes a good, if not a wholly convincing, case for Chaucer's knowledge of Holkot's book. In any case her study teaches us that we must be very cautious in attributing to Chaucer first-hand knowledge of all the books he cites. I regret that I received Miss Petersen's important study too late, learning of its publication first through the review in *Romania*, to profit as I should have wished by the rich illustrative material she offers for the *Nun's Priest's Tale*. What little I have been able to insert in the proofs is duly credited where used.

The Scotch poet, Robert Henryson, in his fables retold the story, partly I believe from Chaucer, but probably with the use of a French original like Chaucer's, certainly with large omissions and additions of his own (Laing's ed., p. 118ff., or *Anglia*, ix. p. 354ff.); and Dryden modernized the tale under the name of *The Cock and the Fox*. For versions in foreign languages, allusions, etc., see Petersen, p. 2, notes.

merriest and finest of tales may put one a little in the position of one who spoils a joke by explaining it. Still it may be useful to define certain masterly qualities of the story, which, before, we have felt but vaguely.

We need not insist upon the realism of certain passages. The widow's cottage is absolutely perfect as a picture; while for the like of a mad barnyard rout at the end, we must seek the Rubens of the "Kermess." These two scenes, one a dusky interior, the other a wild chase under clear skies, were merely suggested in the original story. They come to Chaucer as mere subjects; the painting is his.

But the real interest of the tale lies in the characters. Even Chaucer has rarely created any so clearly individual as Chauntecleer and Pertelote. The cock is no less of a personality than a Pandarus; while the hen is far more real than an Emily, and only less interesting than a Wife of Bath or a Chriseyde. The cock fills the barnyard as completely as Achilles the plain of Scamander; and Chauntecleer's dreams become no less portentous than the hero's wrath. The burlesque is doubly delicious, because of absence of exaggeration and truth of description. Chauntecleer is indeed a glorious creature, if you take the pains to mark the sun on his "burned gold." And his rape by Daun Russel the fox is no less of a disaster to his "woful hennes" than the death of Hector to Trojan dames.

In character he is a thorough egotist, a barnyard tyrant, yet with the saving grace of humor; capable then of laughing at himself, though with ridicule largely economized for his obedient harem. Though

an egotist, he feels deeply his duties to society, and pays tribute to himself of assiduous, nay, chivalrous, courtesy rendered to Dame Pertelote. His tastes are fine, and his reading in obscure fields profound. He fairly overwhelms his wife, who has ill-advisedly turned one of his own authors against him in the argument, with a torrent of classical citations for the credibility of dreams. Yet even here he ends his tirade with a compliment which hovers between sincerity and irony. You cannot but love the cock; there is a zest in his pompousness and a humor in his pedantry that would admit him to the gallery whose *chef d'œuvre* is the Egoist. Were it not for the anachronism, the *Nun's Priest's Tale* should be called Meredithian, — a two-edged compliment.

Vanity is, of course, the cock's foible. He has breathed the air of flattery and acquired its habit. His stupidity lies on this side only. And if he swallows the fox's bait guilelessly, it is but the failure of a moment, —

> *"This chauntecleer stood hye upon his toos*
> *Strecchynge his nekke and heeld his eyen cloos,*
> *And gan to crowe loude for the nones."*

For this blessed moment he is ridiculous, but not for long. Shrewdness returns with adversity, and the fox lets go a half-secured prey, that he may boast him whole caught. The cock flies back to his tree, scornful, with honor, if not neck, unruffled; for is not that ruffled neck heroic already — in the eyes of seven hens?

Dame Pertelote, that far less complex character, need not long detain us. Prudence, decorum, and the housewifely virtues are her qualities. Admiring

the learning and genius of the cock, even to citing his authors, she hesitates not to recall him to his better self as occasion requires. Her pleasure is in giving advice, and her forte in household remedies, for both of which Chauntecleer evinces a disregard born of long practice. She makes fun of his dream, explaining it with considerable learning on rationalistic grounds. For this reason Miss Petersen (p. 94) will have us believe that she is a skeptical woman, the humorous counterpart of Chriseyde: "It is possible that Chaucer felt some special interest in the character of a woman who is by temperament skeptical. At all events, such a woman is the heroine of both *Troilus and Cressida* and of the *Nun's Priest's Tale*." The observation is at once just and subtle for Chriseyde; but is not Miss Petersen led astray by mere similarity of substance and phrase when she calls Dame Pertelote "another free-thinking woman"? This is to take the matronly hen seriously indeed. For me, the fun of the situation lies, not in the fact that she possesses a general disbelief in dreams, but that she distrusts profoundly this particular dream of Chauntecleer, and stakes her every-day wisdom against this vagary of a talented husband. The utmost admiration for a helpmeet's genius is not incompatible with a pretty constant suspicion of his judgment in particular instances. This under criticism is my view of Dame Pertelote's "skepticism."

For the rest, she is Chauntecleer's worthy mate, most appreciative of his strutting, if doubtful of his good sense, while he enjoys her company and conversation with an affection only heightened by the genial irony her innocence keeps ever alert.

The fox is kept in the background as the vague and sinister element of terror in this barnyard epic. His single encounter with the cock proves him a worthy foe, and his only fault appears to be over-confidence. We hardly feel him as a person in the drama.

We have shown that this tale of a cock shows no small study of the married state; we refuse absolutely to draw the "moralitee" which the Nun's Priest chose to leave to private interpretation. It is interesting, however, to note that this essentially mock heroic tale retains much of the apparatus of a mediæval sermon. This makes it particularly appropriate to its teller. I can here only indicate the point, referring the reader to Miss Petersen's suggestive pages on the subject.[1]

We have found a number of reasons for liking this story, — its realism, its genial humor, its frank burlesque; we shall, I think, esteem most highly that quality which Chaucer shares with the good La Fontaine and the more emphatic writer of the *Jungle Books*, — the power of making "briddes and beestes" seem more human than most men.

[1] The passages which Miss Petersen regards as "additions in the style of a mediæval sermon," are —

ll. 385–390	582
404–446	583–584
505–510	616–623
518–520	624–626

in all, 72 lines. See her study, p. 117, note; also pp. 95–97.

CHAUCER

THE PROLOGUE

HERE BEGYNNETH THE BOOK OF THE TALES OF CANTERBURY

WHAN that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth

4–11. Descriptions of the coming of spring are common enough in the scientific literature of the middle ages; Chaucer may well have known in its Latin form the following (þ is the ancient character for th): —

"*Ver bigynneth whan þe sonne entrith into the signe of þe Ram. . . . In veer the tyme is so hote, þe wyndis risen, the snowe meltith. Ryvers aforsen hem to renne and wexen hoote, the humydite of the erthe mountith into the croppe of alle growyng thingis, and makith trees and herbes to leve and flowre, þe medis wexen grene, the sedis risen, and cornes wexen, and flouris taken coloure; fowlis clothen them alle newe and bigynne to synge, trees are fulle of leves and floures, and the erthe alle grene; bestis engendre, and alle thingis take myght, the lond is in beute clad with flouris of diverse coloures, and alle growyng thingis are than in her bewte.*" (*Secreta Secretorum*, E. E. T. S., Extr. S. LXXIV., p. 27.)

Here, as in many another passage, are all the elements of Chaucer's description; of no other can the reader say with Lowell, "I repeat it to myself a thousand times, and still at the thousandth time a breath of uncontaminate springtide seems to lift the hair upon my forehead."

The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open yë,
So priketh hem nature in hir corages:
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrymages,
And palmers for to seken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seeke.
Bifel that, in that sesoun on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At nyght was come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
In felawshipe, and pilgryms were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ride.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

7. **yonge**, because still near the beginning of its **course**, which in Chaucer's time was reckoned from the Vernal Equinox.

8. **his halfe cours**, not "half his course." The sun, passing through the Ram (Aries) from March 12 to April 11, **ran its** *second* **half** course in April before entering the sign of the **Bull**.

20. The **Tabard**, an inn, named, according to the old **custom**, from its sign. See glossary.

But natheles, whyl I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun,
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree;
And eek in what array that they were inne:
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.
A KNYGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To riden out, he loved chivalrye,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
And ever honoured for his worthynesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle naciouns in Pruce.

51ff. Here are the Knight's campaigns as nearly as we can trace them:—

The taking of Algeceiras (*Algezir*, l. 57) in Grenada, from the Moors, 1344; campaigns against the Moors of Northern Africa, *Belmarye* (Benmarin) and *Tramyssene*, l. 57, 62; with Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, at the taking of Adalia (*Satalye*, l. 58), in Asia Minor, 1352, of Alexandria, l. 51, and of Ayas (*Lyeys*, l. 58) in Armenia, 1365. The campaigns in Prussia (*Pruce*, l. 53) and in *Palatye*, l. 65, a Christian lordship in Asia Minor, cannot be accurately dated.

It will be noted that the latest date, 1365, is more than twenty years earlier than the writing of the *Prologue*. Chaucer then appears to be drawing upon the reminiscences of his own soldier days.

53ff. In Prussia (*Pruce*), whither during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries knights of all nations went to fight with the Teutonic order against the heathen of Lithuania (*Lettow*, l. 54)

In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
At many a noble armee hadde he be.
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for our feith at Tramyssene
In listes thryes, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye,
Agayn another hethen in Turkye:
And evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meek as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileinye ne sayde
In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knyght.
But for to tellen yow of his array,
His hors weren goode, but he ne was nat gay.
Of fustian he wered a gipoun
Al bismotered with his habergeoun.
For he was late y-come from his viage,
And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.
With hym ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
A lovyer, and a lusty bacheler,
With lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.

and Russia (*Ruce*, ib.), the knight had often presided over his fellow crusaders at table (*hadde the bord bigonne*).

59. the Grete See, the Mediterranean, so called in Palestine to distinguish it from the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. A crusading term.

60. armee, armed naval expedition. See Appendix.

Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly deliver, and greet of strengthe.
And he hadde been somtyme in chivachye,
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,
And born hym wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe floures, white and rede.
Syngyng he was, or floytyng, al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ride.
He coude songes make and wel endite,
Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and write.
So hote he lovede, that by nyghtertale
He sleep namore than doth a nyghtyngale.
Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf biforn his fader at the table.
A YEMAN hadde he, and servaunts namo
At that tyme, for hym liste ride so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene;
A sheef of pecok arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily,
— Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly,
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe, —
And in his hand he bar a myghty bowe.
A not-heed hadde he, with a broun visage.
Of wode-craft wel coude he al the usage.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,

86. The English under Edward III. made numerous descents upon the Low Countries. Chaucer may well be thinking particularly of the campaign of 1359–60, in which he himself was taken prisoner.

And on that other syde a gay daggere,
Harneised wel, and sharp as poynt of spere;
A Cristofre on his brest of silver shene.
An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of grene;
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.
Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
Hir gretteste ooth was but by seynte Loy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
Ful wel she song the service divyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe,
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught was she withalle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
Thát no drope ne fille upon hir brest.
In curteisye was set ful moche hir lest.

115. **A Cristofre**, an image of St. Christopher, who protects against accidents. Erasmus ridicules this superstition in his *Encomium Moriæ* (1509ca.): "They have the foolish but pleasant belief that they shall not die on a day when they have looked at a Polyphemus Christopher, either wooden or painted." (*Si ligneum aut pictum aliquem Polyphemum Christophorum aspexerint, eo die non sint perituri.*)

120. **seynte Loy**, St. Eligius, patron of smiths. Pressed by King Dagobert of France to take an oath, the saint refused. Chaucer probably means that the Prioress, too, swore not at all.

125. After the fashion of the famous Benedictine monastery of Stratford-le-Bow near London, where the very corrupt Anglo-Norman French was still spoken. Chaucer, who as a diplomatic envoy presumably spoke the "French of Paris," enjoys the affected precision with which the Prioress uses her old-fashioned dialect.

Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet disport,
And ful plesaunt, and amiable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete chere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel breed.
But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimpel pinched was;
Hir nose tretys; hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed,—
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene;
And theron heng a brooche of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia.*

162. "*Omnia vincit amor: et nos cedamus amori.*" (Virgil, Eclog. X., 69.) (Love conquers all things and we yield to love.) The Prioress as a religious person uses *amor* in the biblical sense of "charity" (revised version "love"), 1 Cor. 13, but Chaucer surely relished the ambiguity of her motto.

Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne, and PREESTES thre.
A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye,
An outridere, that lovede venerye;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable:
And whan he rood men myghte his brydel here
Gýnglen in a whistlyng wynd as clere,
And eek as loude as doth the chapel belle,
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.
The reule of seynt Maure or of seynt Beneit,
By-cause that it was old and som-del streit,
This ilke monk leet olde thynges pace,
And held after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
That seith, that hunters been nat holy men;
Ne that a monk, whan he is rechelees,
Is likned til a fish that 's waterlees;

172. St. Benedict (*Beneit*), author of the famous "Benedictine Rule" (A. D. 529), was the founder of monachism in Western Europe. St. Mauritius (*Maur*), his disciple, established the order in France.

178. **hunters**, etc. The allusion is to Nimrod, reputed planner of the Tower of Babel and in the middle ages the type of a godless person. "*Nembroth interpretatur tyrannus. Iste enim prius arripuit in populum tyrannidem et ipse aggressus est adversus Deum ædificare turrem.*" (Isidor of Seville, cited by Flügel, *Amer. Jnl. of Germ. Phil.*, i. 126.) The hunting abbot was a standing object of complaint.

> "*And these abbotes and priours don agein here rihtes*
> *Hii riden wid hauk and hound, and contrefeten knihtes.*"
>
> Wright, *Pol. Songs*, p. 329.

180ff. The proverb of the waterless fish is found in many of the church fathers. Chaucer supplements it from his favorite French author, Jean de Meung (*Le Testament*, l. 1166), humorously reversing the sentiment: —

> "*Whoe'er may wish to find them* (monks) *must seek them in their cloister,*
> *For they care for the world not so much as for an oyster.*"

This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre.
And I seyde his opinioun was good.
What! sholde he studie, and make hymselven wood,
Upon a book in cloistre alwey to poure,
Or swynken with his handes, and laboure,
As Austyn bit? How shal the world be served?
Lat Austyn have his swynk to hym reserved.
Therfor he was a pricasour aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as fowel in flight;
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleves purfiled at the hond
With grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;
And, for to festne his hood under his chyn,
He hadde of gold wroght a ful curious pyn:
A love-knot in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
And eek his face, as he hadde been anoynt.
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
His eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed;
His bootes souple, his hors in greet estat.
Now certeynly he was a fair prelat;

187. **Austyn.** St. Augustine of Hippo, died A. D. 430, greatest of theologians, says in his tract *De Opere Monachorum*, "*I would to God that these which want to let their hands lie idle, would altogether let their tongues lie idle too. For they would not make so many willing to imitate them, if the examples they set were not merely lazy ones, but mute withal.*" (*Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, 1st ser., III. 576.)

The Augustinian Canons (Austin Friars), founded about A. D. 1180, compiled their rule from his writings.

189. **Therfor** is good — much as if to the advice of taking "a little wine for his stomach's sake" one should reply, "*Therefore* I will get drunk every night."

He was nat pale as a for-pyned goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.
A FRERE ther was, a wantoun and a merye,
A lymytour, a ful solempne man.
In alle the ordres foure is noon that can
So moche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen, at his owne cost.
Unto his ordre he was a noble post.
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns overal in his contree,
And with worthy wommen of the toun;
For he hadde power of confessioun,
As seyde hymself, more than a curat,
For of his ordre he was licentiat.
Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun;
He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce;
For unto a povre ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive;

210. **The ordres foure are:—**

(1) Franciscans, or Grey Friars, founded 1209 by Francis of Assisi, appeared in England 1224.

(2) Dominicans, Black Friars, or Preaching Friars, settled at Oxford 1221, a learned order.

(3) Carmelites, or White Friars, founded in Palestine (Mt. Carmel) 1209.

(4) Augustine Canons (Austin Friars), founded in France about 1180.

212f. We must suspect that he had only too good reasons for wishing to get these young women off his hands, though a recent commentator, Flügel, *Amer. Jnl. of Germ. Phil.* i. 126, thinks he merely encouraged runaway matches.

For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt:
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe althogh hym sore smerte;
Therfore, in stede of wepyng and preyeres,
Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.
His tipet was ay fársed ful of knyves
And pynnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a mery note;
Wel coude he synge and pleyen on a rote.
Of yeddynges he bar utterly the pris.
His nekke whit was as the flour-de-lys.
Therto he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere;

232. Six stresses.

233f. The Wycliffites complained bitterly of these peddling practices of the Friars. An anonymous poet of the time writes: —

"*For they have noght to lyve by, thai wandren here and there*
And dele with dyvers marserye (merchandise) *right as thai peddlers were.*"

"*Thai dele with purses, pynnes and knyves,*
With gyrdles, gloves, for wenches and wyves."
Th. Wright, *Pol. Poems and Songs*, I., 264.

239. **champioun.** Minor judicial matters were then frequently settled by a bout at quarter-stave, in which the principals might be represented by champions. The burly Friar, for a consideration, was available on such occasions. So the anonymous writer of the *Plowman's Tale*, once preposterously attributed to Chaucer, complains of the Friars: —

"*They mowen assoyl, they mowe shryve,*
With trewe tillers sturte and stryve."

"*At the wrestling, and at the wake; —*
And chefe chauntours at the nale (ale house)
At fayre freshe (early), *and at wyne stale* (late)
Dyne and drinke and make debate."
Skeat, *Chaucerian and Other Pieces*, p. 175.

For unto swich a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.
It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce
Fór to delen with no swich poraille,
But al with riche and sellers of vitaille.
And overal, ther as profit sholde aryse,
Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse.
Ther n'as no man nowher so vertuous,
— He was the beste beggere in his hous, —
For thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,
So plesaunt was his *In principio*,
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente.
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he coude as it were right a whelpe.
In love-dayes ther coude he mochel helpe.
For ther he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
With a thredbare cope, as is a povre scoler,
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed, for his wantounesse,
To make his English swete upon his tonge;
And in his harpyng, whan that he hadde songe,
His eyen twynkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.
This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.
A MARCHANT was ther with a forked berd,
In mottelee, and hye on horse he sat,
Upon his heed a Flaundrish bever hat;

252. See appendix.

254. **In principio.** John i. 1, "In the beginning was the word," etc., a text with which Friars commonly began their begging petitions.

His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resons he spak ful solempnely,
Sownynge alway th'encrees of his wynnynge.
He wolde the see were kept for any thynge
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.
Wel coude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette;
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce,
With his bargaynes, and with his chevisaunce.
For sothe he was a worthy man withalle,
But sooth to seyn, I n'oot how men him calle.
A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,
That unto logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he n'as nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and therto soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;
For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly for to have office.
For hym was levere have at his beddes heed
Twénty bookes, clad in blak or reed
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrye.
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;

277. **Middelburgh**, a well-known port on an island off the Netherlands. Opposite, on the Orwell, was the English port of the same name, now Harwich.

284. Does Chaucer insinuate, "It was n't worth while to learn his name, for he was just a merchant like another"?

295. **Aristotle.** The study of Aristotle's *Logic* and *Metaphysics* in Latin versions was the basis of higher education throughout the Middle Ages.

297. **philosophre** means as well an alchemist. The Clerk's philosophy had not found him the philosopher's stone.

But al that he myghte of his freendes hente,
On bookes and on lernynge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.
Of studie took he most cure and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quyk, and ful of hy sentence.
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

302. **yaf hym wherwith to scoleye** (attend school). Such gifts had to be begged for, and poor scholars commonly so made their way through the university. Here is the begging prayer of a German student of the thirteenth century:

I.

Exul ego clericus,
Ad laborem natus,
Tribulor multo [s]ciens,
Paupertati datus.

II.

Litterarum studiis
Vellem insuadare,
Nisi quod inopia
Cogit me cessare.

. . . . . .

V.

Decus N . . .
Dum sitis insigne,
Postulo suffragia
De vobis jam digne.

VI.

Ergo mentem capite
Similem Martini;
Vestibus induite
Corpus peregrini:

VII.

Ut vos Deus transferat
Ad regna polarum,
Ibi dona conferat
Vobis beatorum.

Carmina Burana, XCI.

1) "*I an exiled scholar, born to toil and poverty stricken, suffer tribulation despite my learning.* 2) *I would willingly follow the study of letters, did not want force me to stop.*" *His cloak is thin; he cannot attend prayers or mass in the cold church.* 5) "*Oh! N . . . since you are a shining light, fittingly I ask an alms of you.* 6) *Have a mind then like St. Martin's*" — *who divided his cloak with a beggar* — "*clothe with raiment a pilgrim's body.* 7) *So that God may bring you to paradise and there bestow upon you the gifts of the blessed.*"

A SERGEANT OF THE LAWE, war and wys,
That often hadde been at the parvys,
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence:
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.
Justice he was ful often in assise,
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science, and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour was nowher noon.
Al was fee symple to hym in effect,
His purchasyng myghte nat been infect.
Nowher so bisy a man as he ther n'as,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle,
That from the tyme of kyng William were falle.
Therto he coude endite, and make a thyng,
Ther coude no wight pynche at his writyng;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceynt of silk, with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.
A FRANKELEYN was in his compaignye;
Whyt was his berd as is the dayesye.
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.
To liven in delit was ever his wone,
For he was Epicurus' owne sone,

319. Al was fee symple. However a landed estate were tied up by will, or otherwise (e. g. entailed upon an eldest son or held in trust for an heir), he knew how to get around the restriction and treat it as if held in fee-simple.

336. Epicurus, a famous Greek philosopher (died B. C. 270), founded the school which held that pleasure was the chief end

That heeld opinioun that pleyn delyt
Was verraily felicitee parfit.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
Seynt Julian he was in his contree.
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon;
A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.
Withouten bake mete was never his hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,
Of alle deyntees that men coude thynke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe,
And many a breem and many a luce in stewe.
Wo was his cook, but if his sauce were
Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his gere.
His table dormant in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire.
Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.
An anlas and a gipser al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour;
Was nowher such a worthy vavasour.
An HABERDASSHER and a CARPENTER,
A WEBBE, a DYERE, and a TAPYCER, —
And they were clothed alle in o liveree,
Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.

of man. Chaucer learned of him through his own translation of Boethius, bk. iii. pr. 2 : "*Epicurus . . . juged and established that delyt is the sovereyn good.*"

340. St. Julian, patron of hospitality, provided good entertainment for his votaries.

364. **fraternitee.** The brotherhoods, or gilds, were organiza-

Ful fresh and newe hir gere apyked was;
Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras,
But al with silver wroght ful clene and weel,
Hir girdles and hir pouches everydeel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgëys,
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a dëys.
Everich, for the wisdom that he can,
Was shaply for to been an alderman.
For catel hadde they ynogh and rente,
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;
And elles certeyn were they to blame.
It is ful fair to been y-clept *ma dame*,
And goon to vigilyës al bifore,
And have a mantel roialliche y-bore.
A COOK they hadde with hem for the nones,
To boille the chiknes with the mary-bones,
And poudre-marchant tart, and galyngale.
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of London ale.
He coude roste, and sethe, and broille, and frye,
Maken mortreux, and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shyne a mormal hadde he;
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.
A SHIPMAN was ther, wonyng fer by weste:
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood upon a rouncy, as he couthe,

tions for obtaining social and commercial advantages for their members; and they enjoyed extraordinary political privileges. Their membership was, in the main, restricted to the well-to-do. They wore a gild livery, and had fine halls and elaborate ceremonies. The reader need not go far to find the counterpart of these worthy burghers to-day among his friends of the benevolent societies. The ordinances of three London gilds, and very interesting they are, are preserved in *English Gilds*, Toulmin Smith, pp. 1–13 (E. E. T. S., No. 40).

In a gowne of faldyng to the knee.
A daggere hangyng on a laas hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;
And, certeynly, he was a good felawe.
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he y-drawe
From Burdeux-ward. Whyl that the chapman sleep,
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.
If that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.
But of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
His stremes and his daungers hym besides,
His herberwe and his moone, his lodemenage,
Ther n'as noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.
Hardy he was, and wys to undertake;
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
Hé knew alle the havenes, as they were,
From Gootlond to the cape of Fynystere,
And every cryke in Britayne and in Spayne;
His barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.
With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF PHISIK,
In al this world ne was ther noon hym lyk
To speke of phisik and of surgerye;
For he was grounded in astronomye.
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel
In houres, by his magik naturel.

397. While the merchant slept the shipman did as he pleased with the cargo, — presumably tapped the wine casks.

400. **By water he sente hem hoom**, etc. Made them walk the plank, as the English did to the French at the great sea fight off Sluys, 1340.

> "*Fone* (few) *left þai olive bot did þam to lepe;*
> *Men may find by the flode an . C . on hepe.*"
> *Poems of Laurence Minot* (ed. Hall), p. 16.

Wel coude he fortunen the ascendent
Of his images for his pacient.
He knew the cause of everich maladye,
Were it of hoot or cold, or moiste, or drye,
And where engendred, and of what humour;
He was a verrey parfit practisour.
The cause y-knowe, and of his harm the rote,
Anon he yaf the seke man his bote.
Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries,
To sende hym drogges, and his letuaries,
For ech of hem made other for to wynne;
Hir frendschipe n'as nat newe to bigynne.

418. **images**, usually of wax, might be so treated as to bring good or ill to the person they represented.

> "— *clerkes eek, whiche conne wel*
> *Al this magic naturel,*
> *That craftily don hir intentes,*
> *To make, in certeyn ascendentes,*
> *Images, lo, through swych magik,*
> *To make a man ben hool or syk.*"
> *Hous of Fame*, l. 175.

This practice appears to be alluded to in the second Idyll of Theocritus. It survives to-day in the Voodoo practices of the Southern negroes.

420. To the medical science of the time, based upon Galen, the four Elements, their Fundamental Qualities, the Seasons and the Temperaments were conceived to be in the following relation: —

THE ELEMENTS.		QUALITIES OR HUMOURS.		SEASONS AND TEMPERAMENTS.	
Earth	is	cold and dry,	so are	Autumn	and the Melancholic.
Water	"	cold " moist,	"	Winter	" Phlegmatic.
Air	"	hot " moist,	"	Spring	" Sanguine.
Fire	"	hot " dry,	"	Summer	" Choleric.

The Qualities when active in the body are called Humours. Disease to Chaucer's doctor consisted in the excess of any of these Humours in the body, health in their proper balance. *Secreta Secretorum* (E. E. T. S. Extr. S. LXXIV. 72–75).

Wel knew he the olde Esculapius,
And Deïscorides, and eek Rufus;
Old Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
Serapion, Razis, and Avicen;
Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn;
Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.
Of his diete mesurable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of greet norissyng and digestible.
His studie was but litel on the Bible.
In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendal;
And yet he was but esy of dispence;
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,
Therfor he loved gold in special.
A good WYF was ther of biside BATHE,
But she was somdel deef, and that was scathe.
Of cloth-makyng she hadde swiche an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to the offryng toforn hir sholde goon;

429. **Wel knew he**, etc. The doctor was thoroughly versed in medical lore, from Æsculapius, the fabled founder of the science, through the *Greek writers*, — Hippocrates, Galen, Rufus, Deïscorides; the *Arabians*, in the Middle Ages their translators and commentators, — Haly, Rhazis, John Damascene, Avicenna, Averroës; *miscellaneous writers*, — Gilbertyn and Serapion, to *contemporaries*, — Bernard, professor at Montpellier, France, and John Gatesden, fellow of Merton, Oxford, and court physician to Edward II.

442. **pestilence**. The great plague, Black Death, 1349, was followed by many minor epidemics.

450. The offering was made to the priest at the chancel. There was a chance then, never neglected by the Wife of Bath, to elbow for first place in the line.

And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground,
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound,
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste and newe.
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve,
Housbondes at chirche-dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten other compaignye in youthe,
— But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe, —
And thryes hadde she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seynt Jame, and at Coloigne.
She coude moche of wandryng by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat,
Y-wympled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felawschip wel coude she laughe and carpe.

460. **at chirche-dore.** The marriage service was read at the church door, often in a special porch of the south transept; later the couple heard mass in the church.

465. **Boloigne,** Boulogne. An image of the Virgin was, and a fragment of it still is, the object of pilgrimage there.

466. The shrine of St. James the Apostle is venerated at Campostella, in Galicia, Spain.

In the cathedral at Cologne one still sees the ancient and beautiful shrine which is supposed to contain the relics of the Three Kings of the East.

Of remedies of love she knew perchaunce,
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.
A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSOUN of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sithes.
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offryng, and eek of his substaunce.
He coude in litel thyng han suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief to visite
The ferreste in his parisshe, moche and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek therto,
That if gold ruste, what shal yren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clennesse, how that his sheep shold live.

477f. The **Persoun**. See Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* for a portrait of a good parson inspired by, and fairly rivalling, this of Chaucer's.

He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, unto seynte Poules,
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules,
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie;
He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was to synful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
But in his techyng discreet and benygne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, this was his bisynesse:
But it were any persone obstynat,
What so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher non is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
But Cristes lore, and his apostles' twelve,
He taughte, but first he folwed it hymselve.
With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many a fother
A trewe swynkere and a good was he,
Lyvynge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hoole herte
At alle tymes, thogh hym gamed or smerte,
And thanne his neighebour right as hymselve.
He wolde thresshe, and therto dyke and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hyre, if it lay in his myght.
His tythes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.
In a tabard he rood upon a mere.

Ther was also a Reve and a Millere,
A Somnour and a Pardoner also,
A Maunciple, and myself; ther were namo.
The MILLER was a stout carl, for the nones,
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of bones;
That proved wel, for overal ther he cam,
At wrastlyng he wolde have alwey the ram.
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre,
Ther n'as no dore that he n'olde heve of harre,
Or breke it, at a rennyng, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And therto brood, as though it were a spade.
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade
A werte, and theron stood a tuft of heres,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles blake were and wyde.
A swerd and a bokeler bar he by his syde;
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.
He was a janglere and a goliardeys,
And that was most of synne and harlotryes.
Wel coude he stelen corn, and tollen thryes;
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.
A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepipe wel coude he blowe and sowne,
And therwithal he broghte us out of towne.
A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,
Of which achatours myghte take exemple
For to be wise in bying of vitaille.
For whether that he payde, or took by taille,

548. the ram, as prize.

563. a thombe of gold, alluding to an ill-explained proverb, "An honest miller has a thumb of gold." Chaucer probably means that the miller, if he did take triple toll, was honest — as millers go.

Algate he wayted so in his achat,
That he was ay biforn and in good stat.
Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
Of maistres hadde he mo than thryës ten,
That were of lawe expert and curious;
Of which ther were a doseyn in that hous,
Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond
Of any lord that is in Engelond,
To make hym lyve by his propre good,
In honour dettelees, but he were wood,
Or lyve as scarsly as hym list desire;
And able for to helpen al a shire
In any cas that myghte falle or happe;
And yit this maunciple sette hir aller cappe.
The REVE was a sclendre colerik man,
His berd was shave as ny as ever he can.
His heer was by his eres round y-shorn.
His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.
Ful longe were his legges, and ful lene,
Y-lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene.
Wel coude he kepe a gerner and a bynne;
Ther was noon auditour coude on hym wynne.
Wel wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
The yeldyng of his seed, and of his greyn.
His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,
His swyn, his hors, his stoor, and his pultrye,
Was hoolly in this reves governyng,
And by his covenaunt yaf the rekenyng,
Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
Ther coude no man brynge hym in arrerage.
Ther n'as baillif, ne herde, ne other hyne,
That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;

604. he, the Reeve.

They were adrad of hym, as of the deeth.
His wonyng was ful fair upon an heeth,
With grene treës shadwed was his place.
He coude bettre than his lord purchace.
Ful riche he was astored prively,
His lord wel coude he plesen subtilly,
To yeve and lene hym of his owne good,
And have a thank, and yet a cote, and hood.
In youthe he lerned hadde a good mister;
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat upon a ful good stot,
That was al pomely grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers upon he hade,
And by his syde he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,
Biside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And ever he rood the hyndreste of our route.
A Somnour was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fir-reed cherubynnes face,
For sawceflem he was, with eyen narwe.
As hot he was, and lecherous as a sparwe,
With scalled browes blake, and piled berd;
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther n'as quyk-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white,
Ne of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood.
Thanne wolde he speke, and crye as he were wood.

616. **Scot** is still a common name for a horse in Norfolk.

624. The cherubim are frequently painted bright red in mediæval pictures and rose-windows.

And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or thre,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day;
And eek ye knowen wel, how that a jay
Can clepen 'Watte,' as well as can the pope.
But whoso coude in other thyng hym grope,
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophye;
Ay '*Questio quid iuris*' wolde he crye.
He was a gentil harlot and a kynde;
A bettre felawe sholde men noght fynde.
He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
A good felawe to have his concubyn
A twelf-month, and excuse hym atte fulle:
And prively a fynch eek coude he pulle.
And if he fond owher a good felawe,
He wolde techen hym to have non awe,
In swich cas, of the erchedeknes curs,
But if a mannes soule were in his purs;

643. **Can clepen Watte**, can call Walter, or any one else, by his name.

646. **Questio**, etc., "what 's the law in the case?"

652. **Pull a finch**, as we should say to "pluck a greenhorn."

655. **erchedeknes curs**. Archdeacons had charge of church discipline, which included all matters of personal morality. An anonymous poet complains bitterly of their corruption in the reign of Henry III.: —

> "*Nec archidiacono minor turpitudo,*
> *Quem semel arripuit serio vel ludo*
> *Tenet, nec misertus est inopi vel nudo;*
> *Non missura curtem nisi plena cruoris hirudo.*"
>
> Wright, *Pol. Songs*, p. 33.

(Nor is there less baseness in the archdeacon; whom he has once taken up, whether in earnest or in joke, he holds; nor has he mercy for the needy or the naked; the leech which will not let go till he is filled with blood.)

For in his purs he sholde y-punysshed be.
'Purs is the erchedeknes helle,' seyde he.
But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man hym drede
— For curs wol slee right as assoillyng savith —
And also war hym of a *significavit.*
In daunger hadde he at his owne gyse
The yonge girles of the diocise,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed.
A gerland hadde he set upon his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;
A bokeler hadde he maad hym of a cake.
With hym ther rood a gentil PARDONER
Of Rouncivale, his frend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he song, 'Com hider, love, to me.'
This somnour bar to hym a stif burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heng, as doth a strike of flex;
By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And therwith he his shuldres overspradde;
But thynne it lay, by colpons oon and oon;
But hood, for jolitee, wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Hym thoughte, he rood al of the newe jet;

662. **significavit.** "The opening words of a writ for imprisoning an excommunicated person." G.

664. **girles.** "Young people of either sex." S.

667. **ale-stake.** The pole projecting from the front of an ale-house on which the "bush" was fastened, and from which a "garland" of three ivy hoops, placed at right angles to each other, also hung.

670. **Rouncivale.** A hospital (a branch of the famous St. Mary's, of Ronceveaux) near Charing Cross, London.

Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernycle hadde he sówed upon his cappe.
His walet lay biforn hym in his lappe,
Bret-ful of pardoun come from Rome al hoot.
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne never sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-shave;
. . . . . .
But of his craft, fro Berwik into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,
Which that, he seyde, was our lady veyl:
He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
Thát seynt Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Upon the see, til Jhesu Crist hym hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person dwellyng upon lond,
Upon a day he gat hym more moneye
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye.
And thus with feyned flaterye and japes,
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen, atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest he song an offertorie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche, and wel affile his tonge,

685. The **vernicle** is the portrait of Christ miraculously imprinted upon a napkin, with which St. Veronica wiped the Saviour's face on the road to Calvary. The relic is preserved at Rome, and the Pardoner, as pilgrims to-day, brought back a small copy of it.

To wynne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so meriely and loude.
Now have I told you shortly, in a clause,
Th'estat, th'array, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this compaignye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke nyght,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alyght.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the remenaunt of our pilgrymage.
But first I pray yow of your curteisye,
That ye n'arette it nat my vileinye,
Thogh that I pleynly speke in this matere,
To telle yow hir wordes and hir chere;
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely.
For this ye knowen also wel as I,
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce, as ny as ever he can,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
Al speke he never so rudeliche and large;
Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe,
Or feyne thyng, or fynde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, althogh he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak hymself ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye woot, no vileinye is it.
Eek Plato seïth, whoso can hym rede,
The wordes mote be cosyn to the dede.
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree

742. From Boethius, Chaucer's translation, "*Thow hast lernyd by the sentence of Plato that nedes the wordes mot be cosynes to the thynges of whiche thai speken.*" Bk. iii., pr. 12.

Here in this tale, as that they sholde stonde;
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chere made our hoste us everichon,
And to the soper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille at the beste.
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste.
A semely man our hoste was withalle
Fór to been a marshal in an halle;
A large man he was with eyen stepe,
A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe:
Bold of his speche, and wys, and wel y-taught,
And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.
Eek therto he was right a mery man,
And after soper pleyen he bigan,
And spak of mirthe amonges other thynges,
Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges;
And seyde thus: 'Now, lordynges, trewely
Ye been to me right welcome hertely:
For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
I ne saugh this yeer so mery a compaignye
At ones in this herberwe as is now.
Fayn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I how.
And of a mirthe I am right now bithoght,
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
'Ye goon to Caunterbury; God yow spede,
The blisful martir quite yow your mede.
And wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;
For trewely, confort ne mirthe is noon
To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon;
And therfor wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.
And if yow lyketh alle, by oon assent,
Fór to stonden at my jugement,

754. **Chepe.** Cheapside, the market street in London.

And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
Tomorwe, whan ye riden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed,
But ye be merye, I wol yeve yow myn heed.
Hold up your hond, withouten more speche.'
Our counseil was nat longe for to seche;
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,
And graunted hym withouten more avys,
And bad hym seye his verdit, as hym leste.
'Lordynges,' quod he, 'now herkneth for the beste;
But tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow, to shorte with our weye,
In this viage, shal telle tales tweye,
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And hom-ward he shal tellen othere two,
Of aventures that whilom han bifalle.
And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle,
That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence and most solas,
Shal han a soper at our aller cost
Here in this place, sittyng by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the more mery,
I wol myselven goodly with yow ride,
Right at myn owne cost, and be your gyde.
And who-so wol my jugement withseye
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouchesauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore.'
This thyng was graunted, and our othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also

That he wold vouchesauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour,
And of our tales juge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys;
And we wol reuled been at his devys,
In heigh and lowe; and thus, by oon assent,
We been acorded to his jugement.
And therupon the wyn was fet anoon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echoon,
Withouten any lenger taryinge.
A-morwe, whan that day bigan to sprynge,
Up roos our host, and was our aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel more than pas,
Unto the wateryng of seynt Thomas.
And there our host bigan his hors areste,
And seyde; 'Lordynges, herkneth if yow leste
Ye woot your forward, and I it yow recorde.
If even-song and morwe-song acorde,
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.
As ever mote I drynke wyn or ale,
Who-so be rebel to my jugement
Shal paye for al that by the weye is spent.
Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer twynne;
He which that hath the shortest shal bigynne.'
'Sir Knyght,' quod he, 'my maister and my lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.
Cometh neer,' quod he, 'my lady Prioresse;
And ye, sir Clerk, lat be your shamfastnesse,
Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man.'
Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And shortly for to tellen, as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,

826. **wateryng of seynt Thomas.** A brook two miles on the Canterbury road.

The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,
Of which ful blithe and glad was every wight;
And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By forward and by composicioun,
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?
And whan this goode man saugh that 't was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward by his free assent,
He seyde: 'Syn I shal bigynne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!
Now lat us ride, and herkneth what I seye.'
And with that word we riden forth our weye;
And he bigan with right a mery chere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

Heere endith the prolog of this book; and heere bigynneth the first tale which is the Kynghtes Tale.

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

Iamque domos patrias, Scithice post aspera gentis
Prelia laurigero, etc.

WHILOM, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contree hadde he wonne;

Iamque domos patrias, Scithicæ post aspera gentis
Prælia, laurigero subeuntem Thesea curru
Lætifici plausus, missusque ad sidera vulgi
Clamor, et emeritis hilaris tuba nuntiat armis.
Statius, *Thebaïd*, xii. 519.

Chaucer had already cited these lines of Statius in the poem of *Anelida and Arcite* (ll. 22 ff.), where he translates them as follows: —

"*Whan Theseus with werres long and grete*
The aspre folk of Cithe hadde overcome,
With laurer crouned in his char gold-bete,
Home to his contre houses is y-come;
For which this peple, blisful al and some,
So cryden that unto the sterres it wente,
And him to honouren dide al hir intente."

He places these lines from the *Thebaïd* at the head of his story of *Palamon and Arcite* to remind himself and his reader that he had used Statius in its composition (see introduction). When *Palamon* became the *Knight's Tale*, this citation, quite out of keeping with the Knight's character, stands, probably by a mere oversight.

The immediate source of the *Knight's Tale* is the *Teseide* of Boccaccio, occasionally mentioned in the notes. When the reader is thoroughly familiar with the *Knight's Tale* he may profitably consult the introduction with regard to Chaucer's treatment of his original.

That with his wisdom and his chivalrye
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
That whilom was y-cleped Scithia;
And weddede the queen Ypolita,
And broghte hir hoom with hym in his contree
With muchel glorie and greet solempnitee,
And eek hir yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ride,
And al his hoost, in armes hym biside.
And certes, if it n'ere to long to here,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bitwixen Athenës and Amazones;
And how asseged was Ypolita,
The faire, hardy queen of Scithia;
And of the feste that was at hir weddynge,
And of the tempest at hir hom-comynge;
But al that thyng I moot as now forbere.
I have, God woot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke been the oxen in my plough,
The remenant of the tale is long ynough;
I wol nat letten eek noon of this route,
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat see now who shal the soper wynne,
And ther I lefte, I wol ageyn bigynne.
This duk, of whom I make mencioun,
When he was come almost unto the toun,
In al his wele and in his moste pride,
He was war, as he caste his eye aside,
Wher that ther kneled in the hye weye
A companye of ladies, tweye and tweye,

Ech after other, clad in clothes blake;
But swich a cry and swich a wo they make,
That in this world n'is creäture livynge,
That herde swich another weymentynge;
And of this cry they n'olde never stenten,
Til they the reynes of his brydel henten.
'What folk been ye, that at myn hom-comynge
Perturben so my feste with cryinge?'
Quod Theseus, 'have ye so greet envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crye?
Or who hath yow mysboden, or offended?
And telleth me if it may been amended;
And why that ye been clothed thus in blak?'
The eldest lady of hem alle spak,
Whan she hadde swowned with a deedly chere,
That it was routhe for to seen and here,
And seyde: 'Lord, to whom Fortune hath yiven
Victorie, and as a conquerour to liven,
Noght greveth us your glorie and your honour;
But we biseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on our wo and our distresse.
Som droppe of pitee, thurgh thy gentillesse,
Upon us wrecched wommen lat thou falle.
For certes, lord, ther is noon of us alle,
That she n'ath been a duchesse or a quene;
Now be we caitifs, as it is wel sene:
Thanked be Fortune, and hir false wheel,
That noon estat assureth to be weel.

67. The abuse of Fortune was a literary fashion of the time, based chiefly upon the *Roman de la Rose* (English translation), ll. 5427ff.: —

> "*Whanne she hem settith on hir whele*
> *Thanne wene they to be right wele,*
> *And in so stable state withall*
> *That never they wene forto falle.*
> . . . . . .

And certes, lord, to abiden your presence,
Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waitynge al this fourtenyght;
Now help us, lord, sith it is in thy myght.
I wrecche, which that wepe and waille thus,
Was whilom wyf to kyng Capaneus,
That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!
And alle we, that been in this array,
And maken al this lamentacioun,
We losten alle our housbondes at that toun,
Whil that the seege theraboute lay.
And yet now th'olde Creon, weylaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfild of ire and of iniquitee,
He, for despit, and for his tirannye,
To do the dede bodies vileinye,
Of alle our lordes, whichë that ben slawe,
Hath alle the bodies on an heep y-drawe,
And wol nat suffren hem, by noon assent,
Neither to been y-buried nor y-brent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despit.'
And with that word, withouten more respit,
They fillen gruf, and cryden pitously,
'Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy,
And lat our sorwe synken in thyn herte.'

But froward Fortune and perverse, 5467
Whanne high estatis she doth reverse,
And maketh them to tumble doune
Of hir whele with sodeyn tourne,
And from hir richesse doth hem fle,
And plongeth hem in poverte," etc.

also Chaucer in *The Boke of the Duchesse*, l. 810,—

. . . "*Fortune,*
That is to lyen ful comune,—
The false trayteresse, pervers!
God wolde I coulde clepe hir wers!"

This gentil duk doun from his courser sterte
With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke.
Hym thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
Whan he saugh hem so pitous and so mat,
That whilom weren of so greet estat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente;
And swoor his oth, as he was trewe knyght,
He wolde doon so ferforthly his myght
Upon the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That al the peple of Grece sholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus y-served,
As he that hadde his deth ful wel deserved.
And right anoon, withouten more abood,
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebes-ward, and al his host biside;
No neer Athenes wolde he go ne ride,
Ne take his ese fully half a day,
But onward on his wey that nyght he lay;
And sente anoon Ypolita the quene,
And Emelye hir yonge suster shene,
Unto the toun of Athenës to dwelle;
And forth he rit; ther is namore to telle.
The rede statue of Mars with spere and targe
So shyneth in his white baner large,
That alle the feeldes gliteren up and doun;
And by his baner born is his penoun
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was y-bete
The Minotaur which that he slough in Crete.

120. **baner, penoun.** A simple knight bore only a forked pennon on his lance. If of considerable wealth and distinguished service, his lord made him a knight banneret, with the right of displaying the square banner usually reserved to the

Thus rit this duk, thus rit this conquerour,
And in his host of chivalrye the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Faire in a feeld, ther as he thoughte fighte.
But shortly for to speken of this thyng,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes kyng,
He faught, and slough hym manly as a knyght
In pleyn bataille, and putte the folk to flyght;
And by assaut he wan the citee after,
And rente adoun bothe wal and sparre and rafter;
And to the ladyes he restored agayn
The bones of hir housbondes that were slayn,
To doon obsequies, as was tho the gyse.
But it were al to long for to devyse
The grete clamour and the waymentynge
That the ladyes made at the brennynge
Of the bodies, and the grete honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour,
Doth to the ladyes, whan they from hym wente;
But shortly for to telle is myn entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and wonne Thebes thus,
Stille in that feeld he took al nyght his reste,
And dide with al the contree as hym leste.

nobility. Oliver de la Marche (*Memoires?* cited by Du Cange s. v. *penonnem*) thus describes the institution of a banneret by Charles the Rash, duke of Burgundy. When it had been shown that the knight Louis supported, according to the ancient requirement, twenty-five men at arms, and had brought a pennon bearing his arms, the duke consented to promote him. "*So the King at Arms gave a knife to the Duke and took the pennon in his hands, and the good Duke without removing the gauntlet from his left hand, twisted the tail of the pennon once around his hand and with the other hand cut the aforesaid pennon, and it remained square, and when the banner was made, the King at Arms gave the banner to the said Messire Louis.*"

To ransake in the tas of bodies dede,
Hem for to strepe of harneys and of wede,
The pilours diden bisynesse and cure,
After the bataille and disconfiture.
And so bifel, that in the tas they founde,
Thurgh-girt with many a grevous, blody wounde,
Two yonge knyghtes liggyng by and by,
Bothe in oon armes, wroght ful richely;
Of whiche two, Arcita hight that oon,
And that other knyght hight Palamon.
Nat fully quyk, ne fully deed they were,
But by hir cote-armures, and by hir gere,
The heraudes knewe hem best in special,
As they that weren of the blood roial
Of Thebes, and of sustren two y-born.
Out of the tas the pilours han hem torn,
And han hem caried softe unto the tente
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sente
To Athenës, to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetuelly, he n'olde no raunsoun.
And whan this worthy duk hath thus y-don,
He took his host, and hoom he rood anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour;
And there he lyveth in joye and in honour
Terme of his lyf; what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a tour, in angwish and in wo,
This Palamon, and his felawe Arcite,
For evermore, ther may no gold hem quyte.
This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
Til it fil ones, in a morwe of May,
That Emelye, that fairer was to sene
Than is the lilie vpon his stalke grene,
And fressher than the May with floures newe
— For with the rose colour strof hir hewe,

I n'oot which was the fairer of hem two —
Er it were day, as was hir wone to do,
She was arisen, and al redy dight;
For May wol have no slogardye anyght;
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh hym out of his sleep to sterte,
And seith, 'Arys, and do thyn observaunce.'
This maked Emelye have remembraunce
To doon honour to May, and for to ryse.
Y-clothed was she fressh, for to devyse;
Hir yelow heer was broyded in a tresse,
Bihynde hir bak, a yerde long, I gesse.
And in the gardyn, at the sonne upriste,
She walketh up and doun, and as hir liste
She gadereth floures, party white and rede,
To make a subtil gerland for hir hede,
And as an aungel hevenysshly she song.
The grete tour, that was so thikke and strong,
Which of the castel was the chief dongeoun,
— Ther as the knyghtes weren in prisoun,
Of which I tolde yow, and tellen shal —
Was even joynant to the gardyn-wal,
Ther as this Emelye hadde hir pleyinge.
Bright was the sonne, and cleer that morwenynge,
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler,
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh,
In which he al the noble citee seigh,
And eek the gardyn, ful of braunches grene,
Ther as this fresshe Emelye the shene
Was in hir walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamoun,

189. See note to ll. 642ff.

Goth in the chambre, romyng to and fro,
And to hymself compleynyng of his wo;
That he was born, ful ofte he seyde, 'alas!'
And so bifel, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a wyndow, thikke of many a barre
Of iren greet, and square as any sparre,
He caste his eye upon Emelya,
And therwithal he bleynte, and cryde 'a!'
As though he stongen were unto the herte.
And with that cry Arcite anon up-sterte,
And seyde, 'Cosyn myn, what eyleth thee,
That art so pale and deedly on to see?
Why cridestow? who hath thee doon offence?
For Goddes love, tak al in pacience
Our prisoun, for it may non other be;
Fortune hath yeven us this adversitee.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, although we hadde it sworn;
So stood the heven whan that we were born;
We moste endure it: this is the short and pleyn.'
This Palamon answerde, and seyde ageyn,
'Cosyn, for sothe, of this opinioun
Thou hast a veyn ymaginacioun.
This prison caused me nat for to crye.
But I was hurt right now thurgh-out myn yë

230. **Saturn** is always a planet of ill-omen, but particularly active in certain positions (*aspect* and *disposicioun*). See *Knight's Tale*, 1595–1611, for the misfortunes produced by Saturn, particularly 1599.

"*Myn is the prison in the derke cote.*"

231. **hadde it sworn.** 'To the contrary' is understood, see *Knight's Tale*, 809.

Into myn herte, that wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of that lady that I see
Yond in the gardyn romen to and fro,
Is cause of al my crying and my wo.
I n'oot wher she be womman or goddesse;
But Venus is it, sothly, as I gesse.'
And therwithal on kneës doun he fil,
And seyde: 'Venus, if it be thy wil
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure,
Bifore me sorweful wrecche creature,
Out of this prisoun help that we may scapen.
And if so be my destynee be shapen
By eterne word to dyen in prisoun,
Of our lynage have som compassioun,
That is so lowe y-broght by tirannye.'
And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wheras this lady romed to and fro,
And with that sighte hir beautee hurte hym so,
That if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously:
'The fresshe beautee sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir that rometh in the yonder place;
And but I have hir mercy and hir grace,
That I may seen hir atte leste weye,
I n'am but deed; ther n'is no more to seye.'
This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
Dispitously he loked, and answerde:
'Whether seistow this in ernest or in pley?'
'Nay,' quod Arcite, 'in ernest, by my fey!
God help me so, me list ful evele pleye.'
This Palamon gan knitte his browes tweye:
'It n'ere,' quod he, 'to thee no greet honour
For to be fals, ne for to be traitour

To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
Y-sworn ful depe, and ech of us til other,
That never, for to dyen in the peyne,
Til that the deeth departe shal us tweyne,
Neither of us in love to hyndren other,
Ne in non other cas, my leve brother;
But that thou sholdest trewely forthren me
In every cas, and I shal forthren thee.
This was thyn ooth, and myn also, certeyn;
I wot right wel, thou darst it nat withseyn.
Thus artow of my counseil, out of doute.
And now thou woldest falsly been aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
And ever shal, til that myn herte sterve.
Now certes, fals Arcite, thou shalt nat so.
I loved hir first, and tolde thee my wo
As to my counseil, and my brother sworn
To forthre me, as I have told biforn.

289. Palamon appeals to Arcite's loyalty as a sworn brother. The duties of this knightly relation are well set forth in *Le Roman de la Rose* (English version), ll. 2856 ff.

> "*Therfore I rede thee that thou gett*
> *A fellow that can well concele*
> *And kepe thy councell*
> . . . . . .
> *Ye shall speke of that goodly thyng,*
> *That hath thyne herte in hir kepyng.*
> . . . . . .
> *And if his herte to love be sett,*
> *His companye is myche the bett,*
> *For resoun will he schewe to thee*
> *All utterly his privitee*
> *And what she is he luveth so.*
> . . . . . .
> *In syker wise yee every* (each) *other*
> *Shall helpen, as his owne brother*
> . . . . . .
> *For it is noble thing in fay*
> *To have a man thou dar*[e]*st say*
> *Thy pryve counsell every deell.*"

That this knightly friendship must shun no ordeal is shown in

For which thou art y-bounden as a knyght
To helpen me, if it lay in thy myght,
Or elles artow fals, I dar wel seyn.'
This Arcitë ful proudly spak ageyn,
'Thou shalt,' quod he, 'be rather fals than I;
But thou art fals, I telle thee witterly;
For *par amour* I loved hir first er thow.
What wiltow seyn? thou wistest nat yet now
Whether she be a womman or goddesse.
Thyn is affeccioun of holynesse,
And myn is love, as to a creäture;
For which I tolde thee myn aventure
As to my cosyn, and my brother sworn.
I pose, that thou lovedest hir biforn;
Wostow nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That "who shal yeve a lover any lawe?
Love is a gretter lawe, by my pan,
Than may be yeve to any erthly man."
And therfor positif lawe and swich decree
Is broke alday for love, in ech degree.
A man moot nedes love, maugree his heed.
He may nat fleen it, thogh he sholde be deed,
Al be she mayde, or wydwe, or elles wyf.
And eek it is nat lykly, al thy lyf,
To stonden in hir grace; namore shal I;
For wel thou wost thyselven, verraily,

the story of Amis and Amile. See *Two Early French Stories* in Pater's *Renaissance*.

305. **olde clerkes sawe.** Boethius, Chaucer's translation, bk. iii., met. xii.: "*But what is he that may yive a lawe to loveres? Love is a gretter lawe . . . than any lawe that men may yeven.*"

Also *Troilus*, bk. iv., l. 618: —

"*Thourgh love is broken alday every lawe.*"

That thou and I be dampned to prisoun
Perpetuelly; us gayneth no raunsoun.
We stryve, as dide the houndes for the boon,
They foughte al day, and yet hir part was noon;
Ther cam a kyte, whil that they were so wrothe,
And bar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
And therfore at the kynges court, my brother,
Ech man for hymself, ther is non other.
Love if thee list, for I love and ay shal;
And soothly, leve brother, this is al.
Here in this prisoun mote we endure,
And everich of us take his aventure.'
Greet was the strif and long bitwixe hem tweye,
If that I hadde leyser for to seye;
But to th'effect. It happed on a day,
— To telle it yow as shortly as I may —
A worthy duk that highte Perotheus,
That felawe was unto duk Theseus
Syn thilke day that they were children lite,
Was come to Athenes, his felawe to visite,
And for to pleye, as he was wont to do,
For in this world he loved no man so:
And he loved hym as tendrely ageyn.
So wel they loved, as olde bokes seyn,
That whan that oon was deed, soothly to telle,
His felawe wente and soughte hym doun in helle, —

319. The hounds and the kite. A similar fable is found in the Æsopic collections under the title of the "*Lion, Bear, and Fox.*" It is probable that Chaucer invented the present *dramatis personæ.*

340. **olde bokes.** Chaucer means *Le Roman de la Rose* (ll. 8186ff.): "So, as the story runs, Perithous lived after his death, whom Theseus loved so tenderly, that he sought and followed him . . . and, though a living soul, went to Hades to find him."

But of that story list me nat to write.
Duk Perothëus loved wel Arcite,
And hadde hym knowe at Thebes yeer by yere;
And fynally, at requeste and preyere
Of Perotheus, withouten any raunsoun,
Duk Theseus hym leet out of prisoun,
Frely to goon, wher that hym liste over-al,
In swich a gyse, as I you tellen shal.
This was the forward, pleynly for t'endite,
Bitwixen Theseus and hym Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were y-founde
Ever in his lyf, by day or nyght, o stounde
In any contree of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
That with a swerd he sholde lese his heed;
Ther n'as noon other remedye ne reed,
But taketh his leve, and homward he hym spedde:
Let hym be war, his nekke lith to wedde!
How greet a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
The deeth he feleth thurgh his herte smyte;
He wepeth, weyleth, cryeth pitously;
To sleen hymself he wayteth prively.
He seyde, 'Allas that day that I was born!
Now is my prisoun worse than biforn;
Now is me shape eternally to dwelle
Nóght in purgatórie, bút in hélle.
Allas! that ever knew I Perotheus!
For elles hadde I dwelled with Theseus
Y-fetered in his prisoun evermo.
Than hadde I been in blisse, and nat in wo.
Only the sighte of hir whom that I serve,
Though that I never hir grace may deserve,
Wolde han suffised right ynough for me.
O dere cosyn Palamon,' quod he,

'Thyn is the victorie of this aventure,
Ful blisfully in prison maistow dure;
In prison? certes nay, but in paradys!
Wel hath Fortune y-turned thee the dys,
That hast the sight of hir, and I th'absence.
For possible is, syn thou hast hir presence,
And art a knyght, a worthy and an able,
That by som cas, syn Fortune is chaungeable,
Thou maist to thy desir somtyme atteyne.
But I, that am exiled, and bareyne
Of alle grace, and in so greet despeir,
That ther n'is erthe, water, fir, ne eir,
Ne creäture, that of hem maked is,
That may me helpe or doon confort in this,—
Wel oughte I sterve in wanhope and distresse;
Farwel my lyf, my lust and my gladnesse.
'Allas, why pleynen folk so in commune
Of purveiaunce of God, or of fortune,
That yeveth hem ful ofte in many a gyse
Wel bettre than they can hemself devyse?
Som man desireth for to han richesse,
That cause is of his mordre or greet siknesse.
And som man wolde out of his prison fayn,
That in his hous is of his meynee slayn.
Infinite harmes been in this matere;
We witen nat what thyng we prayen here.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mous;
A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,

388f. A fine hyperbole to express an extravagant grief, — not the four elements, nor creation which proceeds from them, may yield Arcite any consolation.

393–1274. In these lines Arcite argues somewhat lengthily that we know not what is good for us, and that we interfere with the course of our destinies to our proper discomfiture. The figure in ll. 403f. is from Boethius, bk. iii. pr. 2.

But he n'oot which the righte wey is thider;
And to a dronke man the wey is slider;
And certes, in this world so faren we;
We seken faste after felicitee,
But we goon wrong ful often trewely.
Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
That wende and hadde a greet opinioun,
That if I myghte escapen from prisoun,
Than hadde I been in joye and perfit hele,
Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Syn that I may nat seen yow, Emelye,
I n'am but deed; ther n'is no remedye.'
Upon that other syde Palamon,
Whan that he wiste Arcite was agon,
Swich sorwe he maketh, that the grete tour
Resouneth of his youlyng and clamour.
The pure fettres on his shynes grete
Weren of his bittre salte teres wete.
'Allas!' quod he, 'Arcita, cosyn myn,
Of al our strif, God woot, the fruyt is thyn.
Thow walkest now in Thebes at thy large,
And of my wo thou yevest litel charge.
Thou mayst, syn thou hast wisdom and manhede,
Assemblen alle the folk of our kynrede,
And make a werre so sharpe on this citee,
That by som aventure, or som tretee,
Thou mayst have hir to lady and to wyf,
For whom that I most nedes lese my lyf.
For, as by wey of possibilitee,
Sith thou art at thy large, of prison free,
And art a lord, greet is thyn avauntage,
More than is myn, that sterve here in a cage.
For I mot wepe and wayle, whil I lyve,
With al the wo that prison may me yive,

And eek with peyne that love me yiveth also,
That doubleth al my torment and my wo.'
Therwith the fir of jelousye up-sterte
Withinne his brest, and hente hym by the herte
So woodly, that he lyk was to biholde
The box-tree, or the asshen dede and colde.
Than seyde he; 'O cruel goddes, that governe
This world with byndyng of your word eterne,
And writen in the table of athamaunt
Your parlement, and your eterne graunt,
What is mankynde more unto yow holde
Than is the sheep, that rouketh in the folde?
For slayn is man right as another beest,
And dwelleth eek in prison and arreest,
And hath siknesse, and greet adversitee,
And ofte tymes giltelees, pardee.
'What governaunce is in this prescience,
That giltelees tormenteth innocence?
And yet encreseth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce,
For Goddes sake, to letten of his wille,
Ther as a beest may al his lust fulfille.
And whan a beest is deed, he hath no peyne;
But man after his deeth moot wepe and pleyne,
Though in this world he have care and wo:
Withouten doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this I lete to divynis,
But wel I woot, that in this world gret pyne is.
Allas, I se a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewe man hath doon mescheef,
Goon at his large, and wher hym list may turne.
But I moot been in prison thurgh Saturne,
And eek thurgh Juno, jalous and eek wood,
That hath destroyed wel ny al the blood

Of Thebes, with his waste walles wyde.
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For jelousye, and fere of hym Arcite.'
Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite,
And lete hym in his prison stille dwelle,
And of Arcita forth I wol yow telle.
The somer passeth, and the nyghtes longe
Encresen double wise the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lovere and the prisoner.
I n'oot which hath the wofuller mester.
For shortly for to seyn, this Palamoun
Perpetuelly is dampned to prisoun,
In cheynes and in fettres to been deed;
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
For evermo as out of that contree,
Ne nevermo he shal his lady see.
Yow loveres axe I now this questioun,
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamoun?
That oon may seen his lady day by day,
Bút in prisoun moot he dwelle alway.
That other wher hym list may ride or go,
But seen his lady shal he nevermo.
Now demeth as yow liste, ye that can,
For I wol telle forth as I bigan.

Explicit prima Pars. Sequitur pars secunda.

Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was,
Ful ofte a day he swelte and seyde 'allas,'
For seen his lady shal he nevermo.
And shortly to concluden al his wo,
So muche sorwe hadde never crëature
That is, or shal, whil that the world may dure.
His sleep, his mete, his drynke is hym biraft,
That lene he wex, and drye as is a shaft.

His eyen holwe, and grisly to biholde;
His hewe falwe, and pale as asshen colde,
And solitarie he was, and ever allone,
And waillyng al the nyght, makyng his mone.
And if he herde song or instrument,
Than wolde he wepe, he myghte nat be stent;
So feble eek were his spirits, and so lowe,
And chaunged so, that no man coude knowe
His speche nor his voys, though men it herde.
And in his gere, for al the world he ferde
Nat only lyk the loveres maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lyk manye
Engendred of humour malencolik,
Biforen, in his celle fantastik.
And shortly, turned was al up-so-doun
Bothe habit and eek disposicioun
Of hym, this woful lovere daun Arcite.
What sholde I alday of his wo endite?
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or two
This cruel torment, and this peyne and wo,
At Thebes, in his contree, as I seyde,
Upon a nyght, in sleep as he hym leyde,
Hym thoughte how that the wynged god Mercurie
Biforn hym stood, and bad hym to be murie.

518. **Biforen**, etc. In the front part of his head, which was supposed to be the seat of the imagination. "*The Brain . . . is divided in three celles or dens. . . . In the foremost cell imagination is conformed and made; in the middle, reason; in the hindermost, recordation and minde*" (memory). Batman uppon Bartholome, lib. v. c. 3.

527ff. The reader should turn to Ovid, *Metam.*, i. 671ff., for the story how Mercury outwitted Argus, the hundred-eyed watcher of Io. Chaucer may have had other descriptions of Mercury in mind. See Lounsbury, *Studies*, ii. 382, note 2.

His sleepy yerde in hond he bar uprighte;
An hat he werede upon his heres brighte.
Arrayed was this god, as he took keep,
As he was whan that Argus took his sleep;
And seyde hym thus: 'To Athenes shaltow wende;
Ther is thee shapen of thy wo an ende.'
And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
'Now trewely, how sore that me smerte,'
Quod he, 'to Athenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for the drede of deeth shal I nat spare
To see my lady, that I love and serve;
In hir presence I recche nat to sterve.'
And with that word he caughte a greet mirour,
And saugh that chaunged was al his colour,
And saugh his visage al in another kynde.
And right anon it ran hym in his mynde,
That, sith his face was so disfigured
Of maladye, the which he hadde endured,
He myghte wel, if that he bar hym lowe,
Lyve in Athenes evermore unknowe,
And seen his lady wel ny day by day.
And right anon he chaungede his array,
And cladde hym as a povre laborer,
And al allone, save oonly a squyer,
That knew his privetee and al his cas,
Which was disgised povrely, as he was,
To Athenes is he goon the nexte way.
And to the court he wente upon a day,
And at the gate he profreth his servyse,
To drugge and drawe, what so men wol devyse.

529. **sleepy yerde.** "*He took the sleep-giving wand* (the caduseus) *in his mighty hand*" —

"*virgamque potenti*
Somniferam sumpsisse manu."
Ovid, l. c.

And shortly of this matere for to seyn,
He fil in office with a chamberleyn,
The which that dwellyng was with Emelye.
For he was wys, end coude soone aspye
Of every servaunt, which that serveth here.
Wel coude he hewen wode, and water bere,
For he was yong and myghty for the nones,
And therto he was strong and big of bones
To doon that any wight can hym devyse.
A yeer or two he was in this servyse,
Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
And Philostrate he seyde that he highte.
But half so wel biloved a man as he
Ne was ther never in court, of his degree;
He was so gentil of condicioun,
That thurghout al the court was his renoun.
They seyden that it were a charitee
That Theseus wolde enhauncen his degree,
And putten hym in worshipful servyse,
Ther as he myghte his vertu excercise.
And thus, withinne a while, his name is spronge
Bothe of his dedes, and his goode tonge,
That Theseus hath taken hym so neer
That of his chambre he made hym a squyer,
And yaf hym gold to mayntene his degree;
And eek men broghte hym out of his contree
From yeer to yeer ful prively his rente;
But honestly and slyly he it spente,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yeer in this wise his lyf he ladde,

570. **Philostrate.** *Philostrato*, 'one conquered by love,' is the title of the poem by Boccaccio from which Chaucer drew his *Troilus and Criseyde*. Rejecting this unfamiliar name as a title, Chaucer found it appropriate here for Arcite, and used it instead of *Penteo*, Arcite's assumed name in the *Teseide*.

And bar hym so in pees and eek in werre,
Ther n'as no man that Theseus hath derre.
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
And speke I wol of Palamon a lite.
In derknesse and horrible and strong prisoun
This seven yeer hath seten Palamoun,
Forpyned, what for wo and for distresse;
Who feeleth double soor and hevynesse
But Palamon? that love destreyneth so,
That wood out of his wit he goth for wo;
And eek therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly, noght only for a yeer.
Who coude ryme in Englissh proprely
His martirdom? for sothe, it am nat I;
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventhe yeer, in May,
The thridde nyght, — as olde bookes seyn,
That al this storie tellen more pleyn, —
Were it by aventure or destynee,
As, whan a thyng is shapen, it shal be, —
That, sone after the mydnyght, Palamoun,
By helpyng of a freend, brak his prisoun,
And fleeth the citee faste as he may go,
For he had yeve his gayler drynke so
Of a clarree, maad of a certeyn wyn,
With nercotikes and opie of Thebes fyn,
That al that nyght, thogh that men wolde hym shake,
The gayler sleep, he myghte nat awake;
And thus he fleeth as faste as ever he may.
The nyght was short, and faste by the day,

605. **olde bookes** say nothing about the date, and Chaucer only cites their authority to reassure the reader. One should always be on his guard when an author says, 'This a true story.'

That nedes-cost he moste hymselven hyde,
And til a grove, faste ther bisyde,
With dredful foot than stalketh Palamoun.
For shortly, this was his opinioun,
That in that grove he wolde hym hyde al day,
And in the nyght than wolde he take his way
To Thebes-ward, his frendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe hym to werreye;
And shortly, outher he wolde lese his lyf,
Or wynnen Emelye unto his wyf;
This is th'effect and his entente pleyn.
Now wol I turne unto Arcite ageyn,
That litel wiste how ny that was his care,
Til that fortune had broght hym in the snare.
The bisy larke, messager of day,
Saluëth in hir song the morwe gray;
And firy Phebus riseth up so brighte,
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,
And with his stremes dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes hangyng on the leves.
And Arcita, that 's in the court roial
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and looketh on the myrie day.
And, for to doon his observaunce to May,

633ff. There are no more buoyant and joyous lines than these in English literature, and they are Chaucer's own, including the beautiful figure

"*al the orient laugheth of the lighte,*"

which is suggested by Dante, *Purg.*, i. 20 (Longfellow's translation),

"*The beauteous planet that to love incites*
Was making all the Orient to laugh."

642. May-day "observaunce" must have been thoroughly established in Merry England of Chaucer's time, for there is

Remembryng on the poynt of his desir,
He on a courser, stertlyng as the fir,
Is riden into the feeldes, hym to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye;
And to the grove, of which that I yow tolde,
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To maken hym a gerland of the greves,
Were it of wodebynde or hawethorn leves,
And loude he song ageyn the sonne shene:
'May, with alle thy floures and thy grene,
Welcome be thou, faire fresshe May,
I hope that I som grene gete may.'
And from his courser, with a lusty herte,
Into the grove ful hastily he sterte,

nothing of this in the *Teseide;* but I know of no earlier allusion to the custom.

Henry VIII., in his earlier years, never failed of his Maying: "*On Maie day then next folowing in the second yeare of his reigne his grace being young, and willing not to be idle, rose in the morning verie earlie to fetch maie or greene boughs, himself fresh & richlie apparelled.*" — Holinshed, *Chronicle* (ed. 1808), iii. 556.

See *Knight's Tale*, 184ff. and 652ff.

Queen Guenivere, too, went Maying, for which the good knight, Sir Thomas Malory (*Morte Darthur*, Somner, 772), praises her: "*therfore alle ye that be lovers/calle unto your remembraunce the moneth of may/lyke as dyd quene Guenever. / For whome I make here a lytel mencyon that whyle she lyved/she was a true lover/and therfore she had a good ende.*"

"*Soo it befelle in the moneth of May/quene Guenever called unto her knyghtes of the table rounde/and she gafe them warnynge that erly upon the morowe she wolde ryde on mayeng in to woodes & feldes besyde westmynstre/' & I warne yow that there be none of yow but that he be wel horsed/and that ye alle be clothed in grene outher in sylke and I shalle brynge with me ten ladyes/and every knyght shalle have a lady behynde hym/and every knyght shal have a squyer and two yomen.' . . . Soo as the quene had mayed and alle her knyghtes/alle were bedasshed* (bedecked) *with herbys mosses and floures in the best manner and fresshest.*"

And in a path he rometh up and doun,
Ther as by aventure this Palamoun
Was in a bussh, that no man myghte hym see,
For sore afered of his deeth was he.
Nothyng ne knew he that it was Arcite:
God wot he wolde have trowed it ful lite.
But sooth is seyd, gon sithen many yeres,
That feeld hath eyen, and the wode hath eres.
It is ful fair a man to bere hym evene,
For alday meeteth men at unset stevene.
Ful litel wot Arcite of his felawe,
That was so ny to herknen al his sawe,
For in the bussh he sitteth now ful stille.
Whan that Arcite hadde romed al his fille,
And songen al the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fil sodeynly,
As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,
Now in the croppe, now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
Right so can gery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
Is gerful, right so chaungeth she array.
Selde is the Friday al the wyke ylike.
Whan that Arcite had songe, he gan to sike,
And sette hym doun withouten any more:
'Allas!' quod he, 'that day that I was bore!
How longe, Juno, thurgh thy crueltee,
Woltow werreyen Thebes the citee?
Allas! y-brought is to confusioun
The blood roial of Cadme and Amphioun, —

681. **al the wyke ylike.** Like the rest of the week; still a traditional belief, — Devonshire proverb, "*Fridays in the week are never aleek.*"

Of Cadmus, which that was the firste man
That Thebes bulte, or first the toun bigan,
And of the citee first was crouned kyng,
Of his lynage am I, and his ofspryng
By verray ligne, as of the stok roial;
And now I am so caitif and so thral,
That he, that is my mortal enemy,
I serve hym as his squyer povrely.
And yet doth Juno me wel more shame,
For I dar noght biknowe myn owne name,
But ther as I was wont to highte Arcite,
Now highte I Philostrate, noght worth a myte.
Allas thou felle Mars! allas Juno!
Thus hath your ire our kynrede al fordo,
Save only me, and wrecched Palamoun,
That Theseus martireth in prisoun.
And over al this, to sleen me utterly,
Love hath his firy dart so brennyngly
Y-stiked thurgh my trewe careful herte,
That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte.
Ye sleen me with your eyen, Emelye;
Ye been the cause wherfor that I dye.
Of al the remenant of myn other care
Ne sette I nat the mountaunce of a tare,
So that I coude doon aught to your plesaunce.'
And with that word he fil doun in a traunce
A longe tyme; and afterward he upsterte.
This Palamoun, that thoughte that thurgh his herte
He felte a cold swerd sodeynliche glyde,
For ire he quook, no lenger wolde he byde.
And whan that he had herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
He sterte hym up out of the buskes thikke,
And seyde, 'Arcite, false traitour wikke,

Now artow hent, that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,
And art my blood, and to my counseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have told thee heer-biforn,
And hast by-japed heer duk Theseus,
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus;
I wol be deed, or elles thou shalt dye.
Thou shalt nat love my lady Emelye,
But I wol love hir only and namo;
For I am Palamoun, thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepne have in this place,
But out of prison am astert by grace,
I drede noght that outher thou shalt dye,
Or thou ne shalt nat loven Emelye.
Chees which thou wolt, or thou shalt nat asterte.'
This Arcite, with ful despitous herte,
Whan he hym knew, and hadde his tale herd,
As fiers as leoun pulled out a swerd,
And seyde thus: 'by God that sit above,
N'ere it that thou art sik and wood for love,
And eek that thou no wepne hast in this place,
Thou sholdest never out of this grove pace,
That thou ne sholdest dyen of myn hond.
For I defye the seurtee and the bond
Which that thou seist that I have maad to thee.
What, verray fool, thynk wel that love is free,
And I wol love hir, maugre al thy myght!
But, for as muche as thou 'rt a worthy knyght,
And wilnest to darreyne hir by bataille,
Have heer my trouthe, tomorwe I wol nat faile,
Withouten wityng of any other wight,
That heer I wol be founden as a knyght,
And bryngen harneys right ynough for thee;
And chees the beste, and leve the worste for me.

And mete and drynke this nyght wol I brynge
Ynough for thee, and clothes for thy beddynge.
And, if so be that thou my lady wynne,
And sle me in this wode ther I am inne,
Thou mayst wel have thy lady, as for me.'
This Palamon answerde: 'I graunte it thee.'
And thus they been departed til amorwe,
When ech of hem had leyd his feith to borwe.
O Cupide, out of alle charitee!
O regne, that wolt no felawe have with thee!
Ful sooth is seyd, that love ne lordshipe
Wol noght, his thankes, have no felawshipe;
Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun.
Arcite is riden anon unto the toun,
And on the morwe, er it were dayes light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight,
Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
The bataille in the feeld bitwix hem tweyne.
And on his hors, allone as he was born,
He carieth al this harneys hym biforn;
And in the grove, at tyme and place y-set,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben met.
Tho chaungen gan the colour in hir face;
Right as the hunters in the regne of Trace,

767f. "There 's no partnership in love and authority." Chaucer has the proverb from the *Roman de la Rose*, 487, which in its turn borrows it from Ovid, *Metam.*, ii. 846: —

> "*Non bene conveniunt, nec in una sede morantur*
> *Majestas et Amor;*"

or *Ars Am.*, l. 564: —

> "*Non bene cum sociis regna Venusque manent.*"

780. The vivid simile of the hunter at the gap passed from Statius, *Theb.*, iv. 494, through Dante, *Inf.*, xiii. 112, to Boccaccio,

That stondeth at the gappe with a spere,
Whan hunted is the leoun or the bere,
And hereth hym come russhyng in the greves,
And breketh bothe bowes and the leves,
And thynketh, 'heer cometh my mortel enemy,
Withoute faile, he moot be deed, or I;
For outher I moot sleen hym at the gappe,
Or he moot sleen me, if that me myshappe:'
So ferden they, in chaungyng of hir hewe,
As fer as everich of hem other knewe.
Ther n'as no 'Good day,' ne no saluyng;
But streight withouten word or rehersyng,
Everich of hem heelp for to armen other,
As frendly as he were his owne brother;
And after that, with sharpe speres stronge
They foynen ech at other wonder longe.
Thou myghtest wene that this Palamoun
In his fightyng were a wood leoun;
And as a cruel tigre was Arcite:
As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,
That frothen white as foom for ire wood.
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.
And in this wise I lete hem fightyng dwelle;
And forth I wol of Theseus yow telle.

Teseide, vii. 106. Chaucer follows the latter, with Dante's version also in mind.

Boccaccio uses the figure to express the apprehension of the knights before the great tournament; Chaucer transfers it to this place to lend dignity to the fratricidal duel of Palamon and Arcite. The fact illustrates excellently the freedom with which he used his source.

791. **Ther n'as no 'Good day,'** etc. How sturdily English this scene is. The two knights aid each other like gentlemen, but in grim silence, as those who are to fight to the death. In Boccaccio, *Tes.*, v. 61f.; Arcite protests to the last his reluctance to fight, and the cousins rush together each with his word of defiance, v. 64.

The Destynee, Ministre General,
That executeth in the world over-al
The purveiaunce, that God hath seyn biforn,
So strong it is, that though the world had sworn
The contrarie of a thyng, by ye or nay,
Yet somtyme it shal fallen on a day
That falleth nat eft withinne a thousand yere.
For certeynly oure appetites here,
Be it of werre, or pees, or hate, or love,
Al is this reuled by the sighte above.
This mene I now by myghty Theseus,
That for to honten is so desirous,
And namely at the grete hert in May,
That in his bed ther daweth hym no day,
That he n'is clad, and redy for to ride
With hunte and horn, and houndes hym bisyde.
For in his huntyng hath he swich delit,
That it is al his joye and appetit
To been hymself the grete hertes bane;
For after Mars he serveth now Diane.
Cleer was the day, as I have told er this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blis,
With his Ypolita, the faire quene,
And Emelyë, clothed al in grene,
On huntyng be they riden roially.
And to the grove, that stood ful faste by,
In which ther was an hert, as men hym tolde,
Duk Theseus the streighte wey hath holde.
And to the launde he rideth hym ful right,
For thider was the hert wont have his flight,
And over a brook, and so forth on his weye.
This duk wol han a cours at hym or tweye
With houndes, swiche as that hym list comaunde.
And whan this duk was come unto the launde,

Under the sonne he looketh, and anon
He was war of Arcite and Palamon,
That foughten breme, as it were bores two;
The brighte swerdes wenten to and fro
So hidously, that with the leeste strook
It semed as it wolde felle an ook;
But what they were, nothyng he ne woot.
This duk his courser with his spores smoot,
And at a stert he was bitwix hem two,
And pulled out a swerd and cride, 'Ho!
Namore, up peyne of lesyng of your heed.
By myghty Mars, he shal anon be deed,
That smyteth any strook, that I may seen!
But telleth me what myster men ye been,
That been so hardy for to fighten here
Withouten juge or other officere,
As it were in a listes roially?'
This Palamon answerde hastily,
And seyde: 'Sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We have the deeth deserved bothe two.
Two woful wrecches been we, two caytyves,
That been encombred of our owne lyves;
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neither mercy ne refuge,
But sle me first for seynte charitee,
But sle my felawe eek as wel as me;
Or sle hym first; for, though thou knowest it lite,
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banysshed on his heed,
For which he hath deserved to be deed.
For this is he that cam unto thy gate,
And seyde, that he highte Philostrate.

867. **on his heed.** On forfeit of.

Thus hath he japed thee ful many a yeer,
And thou has maked hym thy chief squyer;
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I shal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun,
That I am thilke woful Palamoun,
That hath thy prisoun broken wikkedly.
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I
That loveth so hote Emelya the brighte,
That I wol dye present in hir sighte.
Therfore I axe deeth and my juwise;
But sle my felawe in the same wise,
For bothe han we deserved to be slayn.'
This worthy duk answerde anon agayn,
And seide, 'This is a short conclusioun:
Youre owne mouth, by your confessioun,
Hath dampned you, and I wol it recorde,
It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the corde.
Ye shul be deed, by myghty Mars the rede!'
The quene anon, for verray wommanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so dide Emelye,
And alle the ladies in the companye,
Gret pitee was it, as it thoughte hem alle,
That ever swich a chaunce sholde falle;
For gentil men they were, of greet estat,
And nothyng but for love was this debat,—
And sawe hir bloody woundes wyde and sore;
And alle criden, bothe lasse and more,
'Have mercy, lord, upon us wommen alle!'
And on hir bare knees adoun they falle,
And wolde have kist his feet ther as he stood,
Til at the laste aslaked was his mood;

888. **pyne yow with the corde.** "Put you to the torture," the common way with accused persons.

For pitee renneth soone in gentil herte.
And though he firste for ire quook and sterte,
He hath considered shortly, in a clause,
The trespas of hem bothe, and eek the cause:
And although that his ire hir gilt accused,
Yet in his resoun he hem bothe excused;
And thus he thoghte wel, that every man
Wol helpe hymself in love, if that he can,
And eek delivere hymself out of prisoun;
And eek his herte hadde compassioun
Of wommen, for they wepen ever in oon;
And in his gentil herte he thoghte anoon,
And softe unto hymself he seyde, 'Fy
Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,
But been a leoun, bothe in word and dede,
To hem that been in repentaunce and drede,
As wel as to a proud despitous man,
That wol maynteyne that he first bigan!
That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
That in swich cas can no divisioun,
But weyeth pride and humblesse after oon.'
And shortly, whan his ire is thus agoon,
He gan to looken up with eyen lighte,
And spak thise same wordes al on highte:—
'The god of love, a! *benedicite*,
How myghty and how greet a lord is he!
Ayeyns his myght ther gayneth none obstacles,
He may be cleped a god for his myracles;

903. **For pitee**, etc. This may be fairly called Chaucer's favorite line, for he has used it no less than four times (*Merchant's Tale*, E. 1986, *Squire's Tale*, F. 479, *Legend of Good Women*, 503). To Chaucer the real distinction of a "gentil," high-bred soul is ready sympathy, and it is doubtful if we shall better the definition.

922. **can no divisioun.** Sees no distinction.

For he can maken at his owne gyse
Of everich herte, as that hym list devyse.
Lo heer, this Arcite and this Palamoun,
That quitly weren out of my prisoun,
And myghte han lived in Thebes roially,
And witen I am hir mortal enemy,
And that hir deth lyth in my myght also,
And yet hath love, maugree hir eyen two,
Y-broght hem hider bothe for to dye!
Now looketh, is nat that an heigh folye?
Whó may been a fool, but if he love?
Bihold, for Goddes sake that sit above,
Se how they blede! be they noght wel arrayed?
Thus hath hir lord, the god of love, y-payed
Hir wages and hir fees for hir servyse!
And yet they wenen for to been ful wise
That serven love, for aught that may bifalle!
But this is yet the beste game of alle,
That she, for whom they han this jolitee,
Can hem therfor as muche thank as me;
She woot namore of al this hote fare,
By God, than woot a cokkow or an hare!
But al moot been assayed, hoot and cold;
A man moot been a fool, or yong or old;
I woot it by myself ful yore agoon:
For in my tyme a servant was I oon.
And therfor, syn I knowe of loves peyne,
And woot how sore it can a man distreyne,
As he that hath ben caught ofte in his las,
I yow forgeve al hoolly this trespas,
At requeste of the quene that kneleth here,
And eek of Emelye, my suster dere.
And ye shul bothe anon unto me swere,
That nevermo ye shul my contree dere,

Ne make werre upon me nyght ne day,
But been my freendes in al that ye may;
I yow foryeve this trespas every deel.'
And they hym swore his axyng fayre and weel,
And hym of lordshipe and of mercy preyde,
And he hem graunteth grace, and thus he seyde:
'To speke of roial lynage and richesse,
Though that she were a quene or a princesse,
Ech of yow bothe is worthy, doutelees,
To wedden whan tyme is, but nathelees,
— I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this strif and jelousye, —
Ye woot yourself she may not wedden two
At ones, though ye fighten evermo, —
That oon of yow, al be hym looth or lief,
He moot go pipen in an ivy leef;
This is to seyn, she may nat now han bothe,
Al be ye never so jelous, ne so wrothe.
And forthy I yow putte in this degree,
That ech of yow shal have his destynee
As hym is shape; and herkneth in what wise;
Lo, heer your ende of that I shal devyse.
My wil is this, for plat conclusioun,
Withouten any replicacioun,
If that yow lyketh, tak it for the beste,
That everich of yow shal goon wher hym leste
Frely, withouten raunsoun or daunger;
And this day fifty wykes, fer ne ner,
Everich of yow shal brynge an hundred knyghtes,
Armed for listes up at alle rightes,
Al redy to darreyne hir by bataille.
And this bihote I yow withouten faille

980. **pipen in an ivy leef.** Whistle for his pains.
992. **fifty wykes.** Used roughly for a year.

Upon my trouthe, and as I am a knyght,
That whether of yow bothe that hath myght,
This is to seyn, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sleen his contrarie, or out of listes dryve, —
Than shal I yeve Emelya to wyve
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
The listes shal I maken in this place,
And God so wisly on my soule rewe,
As I shal even juge been and trewe.
Ye shul non other ende with me maken,
That oon of yow ne shal be deed or taken.
And if yow thynketh this is wel y-sayd,
Seyth your avys, and holdeth yow apayd.
This is your ende and your conclusioun.'
Who looketh lightly now but Palamoun?
Who spryngeth up for joyë but Arcite?
Who couthe telle, or who couthe it endite,
The joyë that is maked in the place
Whan Theseus hath doon so fair a grace?
But doun on knees wente every maner wight,
And thanked hym with al hir herte and myght,
And namely the Thebans ofte sithe.
And thus with good hope and with herte blithe
They take hir leve, and homward gonne they ride
To Thebes, with his olde walles wyde.

Explicit secunda pars. Sequitur pars tercia.

I trowe men wolde deme it necligence,
If I foryete to tellen the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so bisily
To maken up the listes roially;
That swich a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel seyn that in this world ther n'as.

The circuït a myle was aboute,
Walled of stoon, and diched al withoute.
Round was the shap, in maner of compas,
Ful of degrees, the heighte of sixty pas,
That, whan a man was set on o degree,
He letted nat his felawe for to see.
Estward ther stood a gate of marbel whit,
Westward, right swich another in the opposit.
And shortly to concluden, swich a place
Was noon in erthe, as in so litel space;
For in the lond ther n'as no crafty man,
That geometrie or ars-metrik can,
Ne purtreyour, ne kerver of ymages,
That Theseus ne yaf hym mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devyse.
And for to doon his ryte and sacrifise,
He estward hath upon the gate above,
In worship of Venus, goddesse of love,
Doon make an auter and an oratorie;
And westward, in the mynde and in memorie
Of Mars, he maked hath right swich another,
That coste largely of gold a fother.
And northward, in a touret on the wal,
Of alabastre whit and reed coral
An oratorie riche for to see,
In worship of Diane of chastitee,
Hath Theseus don wroght in noble wise.
But yet hadde I foryeten to devyse
The noble kervyng, and the portreitures,
The shap, the contenaunce, and the figures,
That weren in thise oratories thre.
First in the temple of Venus maystow se
Wroght on the wal, ful pitous to biholde,
The broken slepes, and the sikes colde;

The sacred teeres, and the waymentynge;
The firy strokes of the desirynge,
That loves servaunts in this lyf enduren;
The othes, that hir covenants assuren;
Plesaunce and Hope, Desir, Foolhardynesse,
Beautee and Youthe, Bauderie, Richesse,
Charmes and Force, Lesynges, Flaterye,
Dispense, Bisynesse, and Jelousye,
That wered of yelwe goldes a gerland,
And a cokkow sittyng on hir hand;
Féstes, instruments, caroles, daunces,
Lust and Array, and alle the circumstaunces
Of love, whiche that I rekne and rekne shal,
By ordre weren peynted on the wal,
And mo than I can make of mencioun.
For soothly, al the mount of Citheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellynge,
Was shewed on the wal in portreyinge,
With al the gardyn, and the lustynesse.
Nat was foryeten the porter Ydelnesse,
Ne Narcisus the faire of yore agon,
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon,
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Hercules,
Th'enchauntements of Medea and Circes,
Ne of Turnus, with the hardy fiers corage,
The riche Cresus, caytif in servage.
Thus may ye seen that Wisdom ne Richesse,
Beautee ne Sleighte, Strengthe ne Hardynesse,
Ne may with Venus holde champartye;
For as hir list the world than may she gye.
Lo, alle thise folk so caught were in hir las,
Til they for wo ful ofte seyde 'allas!'

1071. goldes. Marigolds.

Suffiseth heer ensamples oon or two,
And, though, I coude rekne a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus, glorious for to se,
Was naked fletyng in the large see,
And fro the navel doun al covered was
With wawes grene, and brighte as any glas.
A citole in hir right hand hadde she,
And on hir heed, ful semely for to se,
A rose gerland, fressh and wel smellynge;
Above hir heed hir dowves flikerynge.
Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido,
Upon his shuldres wynges hadde he two;
And blynd he was, as it is ofte sene;
A bowe he bar and arwes brighte and kene.
Why sholde I noght as wel eek telle yow al
The portreiture, that was upon the wal
Within the temple of myghty Mars the rede?
Al peynted was the wal, in lengthe and brede,
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place,
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace,
In thilke colde frosty regioun,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.
First on the wal was peynted a forest,
In which ther dwelleth neither man ne best,
With knotty, knarry, bareyn treës olde
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to biholde;
In which ther ran a rumbel in a swough,
As though a storm sholde bresten every bough:
And downward from an hille, under a bente,
Ther stood the temple of Mars armypotente,

1114. **The grete temple of Mars in Trace.** The description here becomes so vivid that the reader is likely to forget that this temple is merely painted on the inside wall of a small oratory.

Wroght al of burned steel, of which th'entree
Was long and streit, and gastly for to see.
And ther-out cam a rage and such a veze,
That it made al the gates for to rese.
The northren light in at the dores shoon,
For wyndowe on the wal ne was ther noon,
Thurgh which men myghten any light discerne.
The dores were alle of adamant eterne,
Y-clenched overthwart and endelong
With iren tough; and, for to make it strong,
Every piler, the temple to sustene,
Was tonne-greet, of iren bright and shene.
Ther saugh I first the derke ymaginyng
Of Felonye, and al the compassyng;
The cruel Ire, reed as any glede;
The pykepurs, and eek the pale Drede;
The smyler with the knyf under the cloke;
The shepne brennyng with the blake smoke;
The tresoun of the mordryng in the bedde;
The Open Werre, with woundes al bi-bledde;
Contek, with blody knyf and sharp manace;
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.

1132. **Adamant eterne**, Statius, *Theb.* VII. 68, *adamante perenni.*

1137. All these personifications should possibly be thought of as figures sculptured or painted on the outside of the painted temple, but it is more likely that, in enumerating the horrors of war, Chaucer has been carried away from his subject. He returns with l. 1159.

1141. "A verse that makes us glance over our shoulders, as if we heard a stealthy tread behind us: —

> '*The smyler with the knyf under the cloke.*'"
>
> Lowell, *Chaucer*, in ***Literary Essays.***

Boccaccio, *Teseide*, VII. 34, supplied only, —

> "*Treasons with hidden daggers . . .*
> *Plots with fair appearance.*"

The sleëre of hymself yet saugh I ther,
His herte-blood hath bathed al his heer;
The nayl y-driven in the shode a-nyght;
The colde Deeth, with mouth gapyng upright.
Amyddes of the temple sat Meschaunce,
With disconfort and sory contenaunce.
Yet saugh I Woodnesse laughyng in his rage;
Armed Compleynt, Outhees, and fiers Outrage.
The careyne in the bussh, with throte y-corve:
A thousand slayn, and nat of qualm y-storve;
The tiraunt, with the prey by force y-raft;
The toun destroyed, ther was nothyng laft.
Yet saugh I brent the shippes, hoppesteres;
The hunte strangled with the wilde beres:
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
The cook y-scalded, for al his longe ladel.
Noght was foryeten by the infortune of Marte;
The carter over-riden with his carte,
Under the wheel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther were also, of Martes divisioun,
The barbour, and the bocher, and the smyth
That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his styth.
And al above, depeynted in a tour,
Saw I Conquest sittynge in greet honour,
Wíth the sharpe swerde over his heed
Hángyng by a sotil twyned threed.

1149. **The nayl**, etc. See the story of Jael and Sisera, *Judges* iv., and Chaucer's lines, *Cant. T., D.* 765, —

> "*Of latter date of wives hath he red,*
> *That somme han slayn hir housbondes in hir bed, . . .*
> *And somme han driven nayles in hir brayn,*
> *Whyl that they slepte, and thus they han been slayn.*"

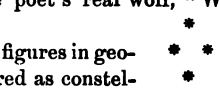
which is conventional and flat enough.

1160ff. Chaucer passes from the horrors of violence and war, properly attributable to the god Mars, to the chapter of accidents, often sufficiently trivial, due, according to astrology, to the planet.

Depeynted was the slaughtre of Julius,
Of grete Nero, and of Antonius;
Al be that thilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was hir deeth depeynted ther-biforn,
By manasynge of Mars, right by figure;
So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depeynted in the sterres above
Who shal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Suffiseth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may not rekne hem alle, thogh I wolde.
The statue of Mars upon a carte stood,
Armed, and loked grym as he were wood;
And over his heed ther shynen two figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures,
That oon Puella, that other Rubeus.
This god of armes was arrayed thus:—
A wolf ther stood biforn hym at his feet
With eyen rede, and of a man he eet;
With sotil pencel depeynted was this storie,
In redoutynge of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wol me haste,

1183. **The statue of Mars** (Lounsbury, *Studies*, ii. 382, and Skeat). In this description Chaucer borrows from the Latin of one Albricus: "*There was a figure of a raging man seated on a chariot, armed with a hauberk and with the other arms of attack and defense. . . . Before him was depicted a wolf carrying a sheep, for this animal* (the wolf) *is especially consecrated to Mars by the ancients.*" But how much of horror and of reality has the poet added to this sorry symbolism; compare only the pedant's heraldic wolf with a sheep and the poet's real wolf, "With eyen rede, and of a man he eet."

1187. **Puella** and **Rubeus** are figures in geomancy of this form which appeared as constellations over the head of Mars. See Skeat's very interesting note on this passage.



To telle yow al the descripcioun.
Depeynted been the walles up and doun
Of huntyng and of shamfast chastitee.
Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a womman to a bere,
And after was she maad the lode-sterre;
Thus was it peynted, I can say yow no ferre,
Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may se.
Ther saugh I Dane, turned til a tree, —
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
But Penneus doughter, which that highte Dane.
Ther saugh I Attheon an hert y-maked,
For vengeaunce that he saugh Diane al naked;
I saugh how that his houndes have hym caught,
And freten hym, for that they knewe hym naught.
Yet peynted was a litel forther-moor,
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,
And Meleagre, — and many another mo, —
For which Diane wroughte hym care and wo.
Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawen to memorie.
This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al aboute hir feet;

1198. **Calistopee.** Calisto, one of Diana's nymphs, was changed into the Great Bear, *Ursa Major*, so that her connection with the lode-sterre, l. 1201, in *Ursa Minor* is an error in Chaucer's astronomy. See Ovid, *Fasti*, ii. 153.

1203. **Hir sone.** Arcas changed into the constellation Boötes.

1204. **Dane.** Daphne, who, pursued by Apollo, was changed into a laurel, Ovid, *Metam.*, i. 560. The explanation ll. 1205f. was not superfluous to Chaucer's public.

1212. **Atthalante.** Atalanta, Ovid, *Metam.*, x. 560.

1217–1228. **This goddesse**, etc. Diana is represented in her three forms (see l. 1455), — on earth, Diana, the divine huntress, and Lucina, the goddess of childbirth; in heaven, the moon (Luna); in hell, Proserpina.

And undernethe hir feet she hadde a mone,
Wexyng it was, and sholde wanie sone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A womman travailyng was hir biforn,
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,
Ful pitously Lucina gan she calle,
And seyde, 'Help, for thou mayst best of alle.'
Wel couthe he peynten lifly that it wroghte,
With many a floryn he the hewes boghte.
Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples and the theatre every del,
Whan it was doon, hym liked wonder wel.
But stynte I wol of Theseus a lyte,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of hir retournynge,
That everich sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge,
The bataille to darreyne, as I yow tolde;
And til Athenes, hir covenant for to holde,
Hath everich of hem broght an hundred knyghtes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly, ther trowed many a man
That never, sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
N'as, of so fewe, so noble a companye.
For every wight that loved chivalrye,
And wolde, his thankes, han a passant name,
Hath preyed that he myghte ben of that game;

And wel was hym, that therto chosen was.
For if ther fille tomorwe swich a cas,
Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knyght,
That loveth paramours, and hath his myght,
Were it in Engelond, or elleswhere,
They wolde, hir thankes, wilnen to be there.
To fighte for a lady, *ben'dic'te!*
It were a lusty sighte for to see.
And right so ferden they with Palamon.
With hym ther wenten knyghtes many oon;

1252ff. Any English knight, says Chaucer, would gladly have a hand in such a fight; in fact the lists and the tournament would have seemed by no means extravagantly described to a knight of Richard the Second's court. A nation that had the Bible stories and the lives of the saints in colored window and on painted or sculptured wall would have taken calmly enough the description of the three oratories. Tournaments as fantastic as the present actually took place. The reader may be willing to use the pause before the fight to attend one in the court of Henry the Eighth.

Six knights enter, mounted and gorgeously arrayed. "Then followed a device . . . framed like a castell, or a turret, wrought with fine cloth of gold, the top wherof was sprad with roses and pomegranates, hanging doune on everie side of the said devise; wherin was a ladie bearing a shield of christall named Pallas." She presented the six knights as her scholars, and defenders in the tourney.

Eight challengers entered the lists and offered as prize of the tournament a spear of gold against the crystal shield of Pallas. After their splendid retinue came, "a pagent made like a park, paled with pales of white and greene wherin were certeine fallow deare, and in the same parke curious trees, made by craft, with bushes, fernes and other things in like wise wrought, goodlie to behold." Live deer leap from the pageant and hounds pull them down before the queen. A herald announces that the knights of Diana offer, as gage of the jousting, their hounds and deer against the swords of Pallas' knights. The king fearing some private malice decrees "that they should tourneie together giving but certeine strokes;" and the chronicler forgets

Som wol ben armed in an habergeoun,
And in a brest-plat and a light gipoun;
And somme woln have a peyre plates large;
And somme woln have a Pruce sheld, or a targe;
Somme wol been armed on hir legges weel,
And have an ax, and somme a mace of steel.
Ther n'is no newe gyse, that it n'as old.
Ármed were they, as I have you told,
Éverich after his opinioun.
Ther maistow seen comyng with Palamoun
Lygurge hymself, the grete kyng of Trace;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face.
The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwixe yelow and reed;
And lyk a griffon looked he aboute,
With kempe heeres on his browes stoute;

to tell us whether the victory went to Pallas or to Diana. — Holinshed, *Chronicle* (ed. 1808), iii. 550.

1271. **Lygurge.** 1298. **Emetreus.** Where Boccaccio devotes an entire book, the sixth, to the enumeration and description of some forty of the two hundred combatants, Chaucer takes one champion from either side; and here he uses with the utmost freedom the descriptive material furnished by the *Teseide.*

The name Licurgo, vi. 14, catches his fancy; he transfers him from Arcite's side to Palamon's, drawing the essential points of his description from that of Agamemnon, *Tes.* vi. 22, 3: —

"*High on a car drawn by four great bulls . . . came Agamemnon . . . of fierce semblant, black-bearded, tall and strong of limb.*" . . . "*Unkempt, no ornaments of gold or precious stones had he, but, fastened by its nails about his neck, a shaggy bear skin, which hid his rusty armor.*"

Chaucer sets this barbaric figure in black and gold among white bulls and hounds. The picture gains much by the contrast.

The vivid touch, ll. 1273 f., comes perhaps from Dante's description of Charon, "*Who round about his eyes had wheels of flame.*" — *Inf.*, iii. 99.

1275. The comparison 'lyk a griffon' probably comes from *Inf.* iv. 123, "*Cæsar in armor with gerfalcon eyes,*" — *con gli*

His lymes grete, his brawnes harde and stronge,
His shuldres brode, his armes rounde and longe.
And as the gyse was in his contree,
Ful hye upon a char of gold stood he,
With foure white boles in the trays.
Instede of cote-armure over his harnays,
With nayles yelwe, and brighte as any gold,
He hadde a beres skyn, col-blak, for-old.
His longe heer was kembd bihynde his bak,
As any ravenes fether it shoon for-blak.
A wrethe of gold arm-greet, of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fyne rubies and of dyamaunts.
Aboute his char ther wenten white alaunts,
Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To hunten at the leoun or the deer,
And folwed hym, with mosel faste y-bounde,
Colered of golde, and torets fyled rounde.
An hundred lordes hadde he in his route
Armed ful wel, with hertes sterne and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,
The grete Emetreus, the kyng of Inde,
Upon a steede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered in cloth of gold diapred wel,
Cam ridyng lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote-armure was of cloth of Tars,

occhi grifagni. The word is usually — and, I think, erroneously — translated 'griffin.'

The name Emetreus appears to be of Chaucer's invention and the description of the hero owes little to Boccaccio; that little is taken from three separate characters, — the bay horse and trappings from one, the golden saddle from a second, and the laurel wreath from a third, — mere touches in the brilliant picture which is Chaucer's.

The sharp contrast between the two kings will immediately strike the reader, — Lygurge, all ponderous and sombre splendor; Emetreus, all mobile and brilliant elegance.

Couched with perles white and rounde and grete.
His sadel was of brend gold newe y-bete;
A mantelet upon his shuldre hangynge
Bret-ful of rubies reede, as fir sparklynge.
His crispe heer lyk rynges was y-ronne,
And that was yelow, and glitered as the sonne.
His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn,
A fewe fraknes in his face y-spreynd,
Betwixen yelow and somdel blak y-meynd,
And as a leoun he his lookyng caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste.
His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge;
His voys was as a trompe thunderynge.
Upon his heed he wered of laurer grene
A gerlond fresh and lusty for to sene.
Upon his hand he bar, for his deduyt,
An egle tame, as eny lilye whyt.
An hundred lordes hadde he with hym there,
Al armed, sauf hir heddes, in al hir gere,
Ful richely in allë maner thynges.
For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles, kynges,
Were gadered in this noble companye,
For love, and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this kyng ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame leoun and leopart.
And in this wise thise lordes, alle and some,
Been on the Sonday to the citee come
Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knyght,
Whan he had broght hem into his citee,
And inned hem, everich at his degree,
He festeth hem, and doth so greet labour
To esen hem, and doon hem al honour,

That yet men weneth that no mannes wit
Of noon estat ne coude amenden it.
The mynstralcye, the service at the feste,
The grete yiftes to the moste and leeste,
The riche array of Theseus paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys,
What ladies fairest been or best daunsynge,
Or which of hem can dauncen best and synge,
Ne who most felyngly speketh of love:
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes liggen on the floor adoun:
Of al this make I now no mencioun;
But al th'effect, that thynketh me the beste;
Now comth the poynt, and herkneth if yow leste.
The Sonday nyght, er day bigan to sprynge,
When Palamon the larke herde synge,
Although it n'ere nat day by houres two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon also.
With holy herte, and with an heigh corage
He roos, to wenden on his pilgrymage
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,
I mene Venus, honurable and digne.
And in hir houre he walketh forth a pas
Unto the listes, ther hir temple was,
And doun he kneleth, and with humble chere
And herte soor, he seyde as ye shul here.
'Faireste of faire, o lady myn Venus,
Doughter of Jove, and spouse to Vulcanus,
Thou gladere of the mount of Citheroun,
For thilke love thou haddest to Adoun,
Have pitee of my bittre teeres smerte,
And tak myn humble preyere at thyn herte.

1359. **in hir houre.** The hour (astrological) of Venus is the second before sunrise. See l. 1413.

Allas! I ne have no langage to telle
Th'effectes ne the torments of myn helle;
Myn herte may myne harmes nat biwreye;
I am so confus, that I can noght seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest weel
My thought, and seest what harmes that I feel,
Considere al this, and rewe upon my sore,
As wisly as I shal for evermore,
Emforth my myght, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alway with chastitee;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this caas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blowen up and doun,
But I wolde have fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse;
Fynd thou the maner how, and in what wise.
I recche nat, but it may bettre be,
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in myne armes.
For though so be that Mars is god of armes,
Your vertu is so greet in hevene above,
That, if yow list, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshipe evermo,
And on thyn auter, wher I ride or go,
I wol doon sacrifice, and fires bete.
And if ye wol nat so, my lady swete,
Than preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Than rekke I noght, whan I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcita wynne hir to his wyf.
This is th'effect and ende of my preyere,
Yif me my love, thou blisful lady dere.'

1381. Pronounce *N'I n'axe.*

Whan th'orisoun was doon of Palamon,
His sacrifice he dide, and that anon
Ful pitously, with alle circumstaunces,
Al telle I noght as now his observaunces.
But atte laste the statue of Venus shook,
And made a signe, wherby that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day.
For thogh the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his bone;
And with glad herte he wente hym hoom ful sone.
The thridde houre inequal that Palamon
Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Dianë gan hye.
Hir maydens that she thider with hir ladde
Ful redily with hem the fir they hadde,
Th'encens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrifice longen shal;
The hornes fulle of meth, as was the gyse;
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrifise.
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye with herte debonaire
Hir body wessh with water of a welle;
But how she dide hir ryte I dar nat telle,
But it be any thyng in general;
And yet it were a game to heren al,
To hym that meneth wel, it were no charge, —
But it is good a man ben at his large.

1413. **houre inequal.** For astrological purposes the period between sunrise and sunset was divided into twelve hours, which, as the day lengthened or shortened, necessarily varied, — were "inequal." This was the hour of Diana.

1415. **Up roos the sonne,** etc. This simultaneous rising of the sun and the heroine produces a humorous effect which is thoroughly Chaucerian. Compare l. **1354.**

1423. **Smokyng,** etc., see Glossary.

Hir brighte heer was kempt, untressed al;
A coroune of a grene ook cerial
Upon hir heed was set ful fair and mete.
Two fires on the auter gan she bete,
And dide hir thynges, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes, and thise bokes olde.
Whan kyndled was the fir, with pitous chere
Unto Diane she spak, as ye may here.
'O chaste goddesse of the wodes grene,
To whom bothe hevene and erthe and see is sene,
Quene of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe,
Goddesse of maydens, that myn herte hast knowe
Ful many a yeer, and woost what I desire,
As keep me fro thy vengeaunce and thyn ire,
That Attheon aboghte cruelly.
Chaste goddesse, wel wostow that I
Desire to been a mayden al my lyf,
Ne never wol I be no love ne wyf.
I am, thou woost, yet of thy compaignye,
A mayde, and love huntyng and venerye,
And for to walken in the wodes wilde,
And noght to been a wyf, and be with childe.
Nought wol I knowe compaignye of man.
Now help me, lady, sith ye may and can,
For tho thre formes that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath swich love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I preye thee withoute more,
As sende love and pees bitwixe hem two;
And fro me torne awey hir hertes so,

1436. **Stace of Thebes**, etc. A piece of innocent mystification, for the *Thebaid* has nothing of all this. Chaucer borrows Emily's prayer from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, a quite recent work, which the English poet places whimsically among his venerated "bokes olde." See ll. 605, note.

That al hir hote love, and hir desir,
And al hir bisy torment, and hir fir
Be queynt, or turned in another place;
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
Or if my destynee be shapen so,
That I shal nedes have oon of hem two,
As sende me hym that most desyreth me.
Bihold, goddesse of clene chastitee,
The bittre teres that on my chekes falle.
Syn thou art mayde, and kepere of us alle,
My maydenhode thou kepe and wel conserve,
And whil I live a mayde, I wol thee serve.'
The fires brenne upon the auter clere,
Whil Emelye was thus in hir preyere;
But sodeynly she saugh a sighte queynte,
For right anon oon of the fires queynte,
And quiked agayn, and after that anon
That other fir was queynt, and al agon;
And as it queynte, it made a whistelynge,
As doon thise wete brondes in hir brennynge,
And at the brondes ende out-ran anoon
As it were blody dropes many oon;
For which so sore agast was Emelye,
That she was wel ny mad, and gan to crye,

1477–79. The flame which dies out but burns again represents Palamon, beaten in the tournament, but finally winning Emily; that which goes out suddenly, with dripping of blood, Arcite, cruelly mangled, and finally killed, by the fall from his horse. See ll. 1497ff.

1480. **As doon thise wete brondes**, etc. This fine simile is merely suggested in Boccaccio. Chaucer takes it directly from Dante, *Inf.*, xiii. 40 (Longfellow's translation): —

> "*As out of a green brand that is on fire*
> *At one of the ends, and from the other drips*
> *And hisses with the wind that is escaping;*
> *So from that splinter issued forth together*
> *Both words and blood.*"

For she ne wiste what it signifyed;
But only for the fere thus hath she cryed,
And weep, that it was pitee for to here.
And ther-with-al Diane gan appere,
With bowe in hond, right as an hunteresse,
And seyde: 'Doghter, stynt thyn hevynesse.
Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
And by eterne word writen and confermed,
Thou shalt ben wedded unto oon of tho
That han for thee so muchel care and wo;
But unto which of hem I may nat telle.
Farwel, for I ne may no lenger dwelle.
The fires which that on myn auter brenne
Shul thee declaren, er that thou go henne,
Thyn aventure of love, as in this cas.'
And with that word, the arwes in the cas
Of the goddesse clateren faste and rynge,
And forth she wente, and made a vanisshynge;
For which this Emelye astoned was,
And seyde, 'What amounteth this, allas!
I putte me in thy protecciouu,
Diane, and in thy disposicioun.'
And hoom she goth anon the nexte weye.
This is th'effect, ther is namore to seye.
The nexte houre of Mars folwynge this,
Arcite unto the temple walked is
Of fierse Mars, to doon his sacrifise,
With alle the rytes of his payen wise.
With pitous herte and heigh devocioun,
Right thus to Mars he seyde his orisoun:
'O stronge god, that in the regnes colde
Of Trace honoured art and lord y-holde,

1509. **The nexte houre of Mars following sunrise was the fourth of the day.**

And hast in every regne and every lond
Of armes al the brydel in thyn hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list devyse,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifise.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my myght be worthy for to serve
Thy godhede, that I may ben oon of thyne,
Than preye I thee to rewe upon my pyne.
For thilke peyne, and thilke hote fir,
In which thou whilom brendest for desir,
. . . . . .
For thilke sorwe that was in thyn herte,
Have routhe as wel upon my peynes smerte.
I am yong and unkonnyng, as thou wost,
And, as I trowe, with love offended most,
That ever was any lyves creature;
For she, that doth me al this wo endure,
Ne reccheth never wher I synke or flete.
And wel I woot, er she me mercy hete,
I moot with strengthe wynne hir in the place;
And wel I woot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, ne may my strengthe noght availle.
Than help me, lord, tomorwe in my bataille,
For thilke fir that whilom brente thee
As wel as thilke fir now brenneth me;
And do that I tomorwe have victorie.
Myn be the travaille, and thyn be the glorie.
Thy sovereyn temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alwey most labouren
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes stronge,
And in thy temple I wol my baner honge,
And alle the armes of my compaignye;
And evermo, unto that day I dye,

1525ff. How Mars and Venus were caught in Vulcan's net to the mirth of the other gods, is told in Ovid, *Metam.*, iv. 181ff.

Eterne fir I wol biforn thee fynde.
And eek to this avow I wol me bynde:
My berd, myn heer that hongeth long adoun,
That never yet ne felte offensioun
Of rasour nor of shere, I wol the yive,
And been thy trewe servant whil I live.
Now lord, have routhe upon my sorwes sore,
Yif me the victorie, I aske thee namore.'
The preyer stynte of Arcita the stronge,
The rynges on the temple dore that honge,
And eek the dores, clatereden ful faste,
Of which Arcita somwhat hym agaste.
The fires brende upon the auter brighte,
That it gan al the temple for to lighte;
And swete smel the ground anon up-yaf,
And Arcita anon his hand up-haf,
And more encens into the fir he caste,
With othere rytes mo; and atte laste
The statue of Mars bigan his hauberk rynge.
And with that soun he herde a murmurynge
Ful lowe and dym, that sayde thus, 'Victorie.'
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
And thus with joye, and hope wel to fare,
Arcite anon unto his inne is fare,
As fayn as fowel is of the brighte sonne.
And right anon swich strif ther is bigonne
For thilke grauntyng, in the hevene above,
Bitwixe Venus, the goddesse of love,
And Mars, the sterne god armypotente,
That Jupiter was bisy it to stente;
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde,
That knew so manye of aventures olde,
Fond in his olde experience an art,
That he ful sone hath plesed every part.

As sooth is sayd, elde hath greet avantage,
In elde is bothe wisdom and usage;
Men may the olde at-renne, and noght at-rede.
Saturne anon, to stynten strif and drede,
Al be it that it is agayn his kynde,
Of al this strif he gan remedie fynde.
'My dere doughter Venus,' quod Saturne,
'My cours, that hath so wyde for to turne,
Hath more power than wot any man.
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan;
Myn is the prison in the derke cote;
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte;
The murmure, and the cherles rebellyng,
The groynyng, and the pryve empoysonyng:
I do vengeance and pleyn correccioun,
Whil I dwelle in the signe of the leoun.
Myn is the ruine of the hye halles,
The fallyng of the toures and of the walles
Upon the mynour or the carpenter.
I slow Sampson shakyng the piler;
And myne be the maladyes colde,
The derke tresons, and the castes olde;
My lookyng is the fader of pestilence.
Now weep namore, I shal doon diligence
That Palamon, that is thyn owne knyght,
Shal have his lady, as thou hast hym hight.

1591. "One may outrun but not outwit the old."

1596. **My cours, . . . so wyde.** The orbit of Saturn, before the discovery of Neptune and Uranus, was the largest known; hence he remained longer than the other planets in unfavorable signs, and had greater power than they for evil. l. 1597.

1598ff. All these evils are caused by the planetary influence of Saturn.

Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet nathe-
lees
Bitwixe yow ther moot be som tyme pees,
Al be ye noght of o complexioun,
That causeth al day swich divisioun.
I am thyn aiel, redy at thy wille;
Weep thou namore, I wol thy lust fulfille.'
Now wol I stynten of the goddes above,
Of Mars, and of Venus, goddesse of love,
And telle yow, as pleynly as I can,
The grete effect, for which that I bigan.

Explicit tercia pars. Sequitur pars quarta.

Greet was the feste in Athenes that day,
And eek the lusty seson of that May
Made every wight to been in swich plesaunce,
That al that Monday justen they and daunce,
And spenden it in Venus heigh servyse.
But by the cause that they sholde ryse
Érly, for to seen the grete fight,
Unto hir reste wenten they at nyght.
And on the morwe, whan that day gan sprynge,
Of hors and harneys, noyse and claterynge
Ther was in hostelryes al aboute;
And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordes, upon stedes and palfreys.
Ther maystow seen devisyng of herneys
So uncouth and so riche, and wroght so weel
Of goldsmythrie, of browdyng, and of steel;
The sheeldes brighte, testers, and trappures;
Gold-hewen helmes, hauberks, cote-armures;
Lordes in paraments on hir courseres,
Knyghtes of retenue, and eek squyeres
Nailyng the speres, and helmes bokelynge,
Giggynge of sheeldes, with layneres lacynge;

Ther as need is, they weren nothyng ydel;
The fomy stedes on the golden brydel
Gnawynge, and faste the armurers also
With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro;
Yemen on fote, and communes many oon
With shorte staves, thikke as they may goon;
Pýpes, trompes, nakers, clariounes,
That in the bataille blowen blody sounes;
The paleys ful of peples up and doun,
Heer thre, ther ten, holdyng hir questioun,
Divynynge of thise Theban knyghtes two.
Somme seyden thus, somme seyde it shal be so;
Somme helden with hym with the blake berd,
Somme with the balled, somme with the thikke herd;
Somme sayde, he looked grym and he wolde fighte;
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle ful of divynynge,
Longe after that the sonne gan to sprynge.
The grete Theseus, that of his sleep awaked
With mynstralcye and noyse that was maked,
Held yet the chambre of his paleys riche,
Til that the Theban knyghtes, bothe y-liche
Honoured, were into the paleys fet.
Duk Theseus was at a wyndow set,
Arrayed right as he were a god in trone.
The peple presseth thider-ward ful sone
Hym for to seen, and doon heigh reverence,
And eek to herkne his hest and his sentence.
An heraud on a scaffold made an 'Ho!'
Til al the noyse of the peple was y-do;
And whan he saugh the peple of noyse al stille,
Tho shewed he the mighty dukes wille.
'The lord hath of his heigh discrecioun
Considered, that it were destruccioun

To gentil blood, to fighten in the gyse
Of mortal bataille now in this emprise;
Wherfor, to shapen that they shul not dye,
He wol his firste purpos modifye.
No man therfor, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner shot, ne pollax, ne short knyf
Into the listes sende, or thider brynge;
Ne short swerd for to stoke, with poynt bytynge,
No man ne drawe, ne bere by his side.
Ne no man shal unto his felawe ride
But o cours, with a sharp y-grounde spere;
Foyne, if hym list, on fote, hymself to were.
And he that is at meschief shal be take,
And noght slayn, but be broght unto the stake
That shal ben ordeyned on either side;
But thider he shal by force, and ther abide.
And if so falle, the chevetayn be take
On either side, or elles sleen his make,
No lenger shal the turneyinge laste.
God spede yow; goth forth, and ley on faste.
With long swerd and with maces fighteth your fille.
Goth now your wey; this is the lordes wille.'
The voys of peple touchede the hevene,
So loude criden they with mery stevene:
'God save swich a lord, that is so good,
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!'
Up goon the trompes and the melodye.
And to the listes rit the compaignye
By ordynaunce, thurghout the citee large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, and nat with sarge.
Ful lyk a lord this noble duk gan ride,
Thise two Thebanes upon either side;
And after rood the quene, and Emelye,
And after that another compaignye,

Of oon and other, after hir degree.
And thus they passen thurghout the citee,
And to the listes come they by tyme.
It n'as not of the day yet fully pryme,
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye,
Ypolita the quene and Emelye,
And other ladies in degrees aboute.
Unto the seetes presseth al the route;
And westward, thurgh the gates under Marte,
Arcite, and eek the hundred of his parte,
With baner reed is entred right anon;
And in that selve moment Palamon
Is under Venus, estward in the place,
With baner whit, and hardy chere and face.
In al the world, to seken up and doun,
So even withouten variacioun,
Ther n'ere swiche compaignyes tweye.
For ther n'as noon so wys that coude seye,
That any hadde of other avauntage
Of worthynesse, ne of estaat, ne age,
So even were they chosen, for to gesse.
And in two renges faire they hem dresse.
Whan that hir names rad were everichoon,
That in hir nombre gyle were ther noon,
Tho were the gates shet, and cried was loude:
'Do now your devoir, yonge knyghtes proude!'
The heraudes lefte hir prikyng up and doun;
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun;
Ther is namore to seyn, but west and est
In goon the speres ful sadly in arest;

1723. **under Marte.** Under the oratory, or shrine, of Mars. So, **under Venus**, l. 1727.

1741ff. The tournament. The reader may compare with this passage Chaucer's account of a sea-fight, *Legende of Good Women*, ll. 633ff. See introduction, p. xxviii.

In goth the sharpe spore into the side.
Ther seen men who can juste, and who can ride;
Ther shiveren shaftes upon sheeldes thikke;
He feeleth thurgh the herte-spoon the prikke.
Up spryngen speres twenty foot on highte;
Out goon the swerdes as the silver brighte.
The helmes they to-hewen and to-shrede;
Out brest the blood with sterne stremes rede.
With myghty maces the bones they to-breste.
He thurgh the thikkeste of the throng gan threste.
Ther stomblen steedes stronge, and doun goth alle.
He rolleth under foot as doth a balle.
He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun,
And he hym hurtleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body is hurt, and sithen y-take,
Maugree his heed, and broght unto the stake,
As forward was, right ther he moste abide;
Another lad is on that other side.
And som tyme doth hem Theseus to reste,
Hem to refresshe, and drynken if hem leste.
Ful ofte a-day han thise Thebanes two
Togydre y-met, and wroght his felawe wo;
Unhorsed hath ech other of hem tweye.
Ther n'as no tigre in the vale of Galgopheye,
Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is lite,
So cruel on the hunte, as is Arcite,
For jelous herte, upon this Palamoun:
Ne in Belmarie there n'is so fel leoun,
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his prey desireth so the blood,

1768. **Galgopheye.** Probably a corruption of the valley of *Gargaphie*, in which Acteon was turned into a stag, *Metam.*, iii. 155.

1772. **Belmarie.** See *Prol.*, 57 note.

As Palamon to sleen his foo Arcite.
The jelous strokes on hir helmes bite;
Out renneth blood on bothe hir sides rede.
Som tyme an ende ther is of every dede;
For er the sonne unto the reste wente,
The stronge kyng Emetreus gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught with Arcite,
And made his swerd depe in his flesh to bite;
And by the force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and y-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamoun
The stronge kyng Ligurge is born adoun;
And kyng Emetreus, for al his strengthe,
Is born out of his sadel a swerdes lengthe,
So hitte hym Palamon er he were take;
But al for noght, he was broght to the stake.
His hardy herte myghte hym helpe naught;
He moste abide, whan that he was caught,
By force, and eek by composicioun.
Who sorweth now but woful Palamoun,
That moot namore goon agayn to fighte?
And whan that Theseus hadde seyn this sighte,
Unto the folk that foghten thus echon
He cride, 'Ho! namore, for it is don!
I wol be trewe juge, and no partye.
Arcite of Thebes shal have Emelye,
That by his fortune hath hir faire y-wonne.'
Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne
For joye of this, so loude and heigh withalle,
It semed that the listes sholde falle.
What can now faire Venus doon above?
What seith she now? what doth this quene of love?
But wepeth so, for wantyng of hir wille,
Til that hir teeres in the listes fille;

She seyde: 'I am ashamed, doutelees.'
Saturnus seyde: 'Doghter, hold thy pees.
Mars hath his wille, his knyght hath al his bone,
And, by myn heed, thou shalt ben esed sone.'
The trompes with the loude mynstralcye,
The heraudes, that ful loude yolle and crye,
Been in hir wele for joye of daun Arcite.
But herkneth me, and stynteth now a lite,
Which a miracle ther bifel anon.
This fierse Arcite hath of his helm y-don,
And on a courser, for to shewe his face,
He priketh endelong the large place,
Lookyng upward upon this Emelye;
And she agayn him caste a frendlich yë,
— For wommen, as to speken in comune,
They folwen al the favour of fortune, —
And was al his chere, as in his herte.
Out of the ground a fir infernal sterte,
From Pluto sent, at requeste of Saturne,
For which his hors for fere gan to turne,
And leep aside, and foundred as he leep;
And, er that Arcite may taken keep,

1825. **And was al his chere**, etc. 'And was all his heart's delight.' See textual note.

1826. **a fir infernal.** In the *Teseide*, ix. 4, as in Chaucer's first version (see textual note), it is a Fury sent by Venus that frightens Arcite's horse. Boccaccio dwells upon her description, and shows the entire audience struck dumb by the horror of her presence. Chaucer, as a practical story-teller, needs only something to frighten Arcite's steed; for this, a vague cause, like a flash of fire, is better than a Fury, whose presence in the earlier version he had insufficiently explained. He may have had in mind also Dante, *Inf.*, iii. 133: —

> "*The land of tears gave forth a blast of wind,*
> *And fulminated a vermilion light*
> *Which overmastered me in every sense.*"

He pighte hym on the pomel of his heed,
That in the place he lay as he were deed,
His brest to-brosten with his sadel-bowe.
As blak he lay as any cole or crowe,
So was the blood y-ronnen in his face.
Anon he was y-born out of the place
With herte soor, to Theseus paleys.
Tho was he corven out of his harneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful faire and blyve,
For he was yet in memorie and alyve,
And alway crying after Emelye.
Duk Theseus, with al his companye,
Is comen hoom to Athenes his citee,
With alle blisse and greet solempnitee.
Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He n'olde noght disconforten hem alle.
Men seyde eek, that Arcite shal nat dye,
He shal ben heled of his maladye.
And of another thyng they were as fayn,
That of hem alle was ther noon y-slayn,
Al were they sore y-hurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled his brest-boon.
To othere woundes, and to broken armes,
Some hadden salves, and some hadden charmes,
Férmacies of herbes, and eek save
They dronken, for they wolde hir lymes have.
For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Conforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel al the longe nyght,
Unto the straunge lordes, as was right.
Ne ther was holden no disconfitynge,
But as a justes or a tourneyinge;
For soothly ther was no disconfiture,
For fallyng n'is nat but an aventure;

Ne to be lad with fors unto the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty kynghtes take,
Ó persone allone, withouten mo,
And haried forth by arme, foot, and too,
And eek his steede driven forth with staves,
With foot-men, bothe yemen and eek knaves,
It n'as aretted hym no vileinye,
Ther may no man clepen it cowardye.
For which anon duk Theseus leet crye,
To stynten alle rancour and envye,
The gree as wel of o side as of other,
And either side y-lik as otheres brother;
And yaf hem yiftes after hir degree,
And fully heeld a feste dayes three;
And conveyed the kynges worthily
Out of his toun a journee largely.
And hoom wente every man the righte way.
Ther was namore, but 'Far wel, Have good day!'
Of this bataille I wol namore endite,
But speke of Palamon and of Arcite.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encreseth at his herte more and more.
The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,
Corrupteth, and is in his bouk y-laft,
That neither veyne-blood, ne ventusynge,
Ne drynke of herbes may ben his helpynge.
The vertu expulsif, or animal,
Fro thilke vertu cleped natural,

1873. leet crye . . . the gree. Had the prize announced as equally merited by the two sides.

1891. vertu expulsif. The expulsive force, which is lodged in the brain, could not remove the festering blood, which prevented "vertu natural" from working normally in the veins.

Ne may the venym voyden, ne expelle.
The pipes of his longes gonne to swelle,
And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venym and corrupcioun.
Hym gayneth neither, for to gete his lyf,
Vomyt upward, ne dounward laxatif;
Al is to-brosten thilke regioun,
Nature hath now no dominacioun.
And certeynly, ther nature wol nat wirche,
Farewel, phisik! go ber the man to chirche.
This al and som, that Arcita moot dye,
For which he sendeth after Emelye,
And Palamon, that was his cosyn dere;
Than seyde he thus, as ye shul after here.
'Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare o poynt of alle my sorwes smerte
To yow, my lady, that I love most;
But I biquethe the service of my gost
To yow aboven every creature,
Syn that my lyf may no lenger dure.
Allas, the wo! allas, the peynes stronge,
That I for yow have suffred, and so longe!
Allas, the deeth! allas, myn Emelye!
Allas, departyng of our compaignye!
Allas, myn hertes quene! allas, my wyf!
Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf!
What is this world? what asketh men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Allone, withouten any compaignye.
Farwel, my swete fo! myn Emelye!
And softe tak me in your armes tweye,
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.
I have heer with my cosyn Palamon
Had strif and rancour, many a day a-gon,

1912. See Appendix.

For love of yow, and for my jelousye;
And Jupiter so wys my soule gye,
To speken of a servant proprely,
With alle circumstaunces trewely,
— That is to seyne, trouthe, honour, knyghthede,
Wisdom, humblesse, estaat, and heigh kynrede,
Fredom, and al that longeth to that art, —
So Jupiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne knowe I non
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,
That serveth yow, and wol doon al his lyf.
And if that ever ye shul been a wyf,
Foryet nat Palamon, the gentil man.'
And with that word his speche faille gan,
For fro his feet up to his brest was come
The cold of deeth, that hadde hym overcome;
And yet moreover, for in his armes two
The vital strengthe is lost and al ago,
Only the intellect, withouten more,
That dwelled in his herte syk and sore,
Gan faillen, when the herte felte deeth.
Dusked his eyen two and failled breeth,
But on his lady yet caste he his yë;
His laste word was, 'mercy, Emelye!'
His spirit chaunged hous, and wente ther,
As I cam never, I can nat tellen wher.
Therfor I stynte, I n'am no divinistre;
Of soules fynde I nat in this registre,

1951ff. Boccaccio describes Arcite's soul as transported to heaven, whence he looks down with scorn and pity upon the sorry turmoil of this life. Chaucer later used this incident in his *Troilus*, v. 1807–1827, preferring here the more realistic treatment. We need not, I think, take the apparent scepticism of this passage too seriously.

Ne me ne list thilke opiniouns to telle
Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.
Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soule gye;
Now wol I speken forth of Emelye.
Shrighte Emelye, and howleth Palamon,
And Theseus his suster took anon
Swownynge, and bar hir fro the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,
To tellen how she weep, both eve and morwe?
For in swich cas wommen have swich sorwe,
Whan that hir housbonds been from hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in swich maladye,
That at the laste certeynly they dye.
Infinite been the sorwes and the teres
Of olde folk, and folk of tendre yeres,
In al the toun, for deeth of this Theban,
For hym ther wepeth bothe child and man;
So greet a wepyng was ther noon certayn,
Whan Ector was y-broght, al fresh y-slayn,
To Troye; allas! the pitee that was ther,
Cracchyng of chekes, rendyng eek of heer, —
'Why woldestow be deed,' thise wommen crye,
'And haddest gold ynough and Emelye?'

1966. **they sorwen so . . . That at the laste certeynly they dye.** Of course they do nothing of the sort, as Chaucer perfectly well knew; and the good poet might well here, if anywhere, have denied himself his joke.

1978. **gold ynough — and Emelye.** "*See how the actual life, the life of debtor and creditor, of the butcher and baker, intrudes itself upon the life of romance, nay, takes precedence of it in the mind of this unartificial man. The means first, be they never so humble and prosaic; and then the poetic end, which casts backward a lustre and a glory upon them.*" — Lowell, *Conversations on the Old Poets*, ii.

Nó man myghte gladen Theseus,
Savynge his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
As he had seyn it chaungen up and doun,
Joye after wo, and wo after gladnesse:
And shewed hem ensamples and liknesse.
'Right as ther deyed never man,' quod he,
'That he ne lyved in erthe in som degree,
Right so ther lyved never man,' he seyde,
'In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.
This world n'is but a thurghfare ful of wo,
And we ben pilgrymes, passyng to and fro;
Deeth is an ende of every worldly sore.'
And over al this yet seyde he muchel more
To this effect, ful wysly to enhorte
The peple, that they sholde hem reconforte.
Duk Theseus, with al his bisy cure,
Cáste now wher that the sepulture
Of good Arcite may best y-maked be,
And eek most honurable in his degree.
And at the laste he took conclusioun,
That ther as first Arcite and Palamoun
Hadden for love the bataille hem bitwene,
That in that selve grove, swote and grene,
Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
His compleynt, and for love his hote fires,

1989–91. Quarles, *Divine Fancies*, No. 24, has expressed more pensively the same thought.

> "*The weary pilgrime oft doth aske and know,*
> *How farre hee's come; how far he has to go:*
> *His way is tedious, and his hart's opprest,*
> *All his desier is to be at rest.*"

And Seneca, consoling a friend, writes: —

> "*Mors dolorum omnium exsolutio est et finis.*"
> *Consol. ad Marciam*, 19.

He wolde make a fir, in which th'office
Fúneral he myghte all accomplice;
And leet comaunde anon to hakke and hewe
The okes olde, and leye hem on a rewe
In colpons wel arrayed for to brenne;
His officers with swifte feet they renne,
And ride anon at his comaundement.
And after this, Theseus hath y-sent
After a bere, and it al overspradde
With cloth of gold, the richest that he hadde.
And of the same suyte he cladde Arcite;
Upon his hondes hadde he gloves white;
Eek on his heed a croune of laurer grene,
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He leyde hym bare the visage on the bere,
Therwith he weep that pitee was to here.
And for the peple sholde seen hym alle,
Whan it was day, he broghte hym to the halle,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.
Tho cam this woful Theban Palamoun,
With flotery berd, and ruggy ashy heres,
In clothes blake, y-dropped al with teres;
And, passyng othere of wepyng, Emelye,
The rewfulleste of al the companye.
In as muche as the service sholde be
The more noble and riche in his degree,
Duk Theseus leet forth three steedes brynge,
That trapped were in steel al gliterynge,
And covered with the armes of daun Arcite.
Upon thise steedes, that weren grete and white,
Ther seten folk, of which oon bar his sheeld,
Another his spere up in his hondes heeld;
The thridde bar with hym his bowe Turkeys,
Of brend gold was the cas, and eek the harneys;

And riden forth a pas with sorweful chere
Toward the grove, as ye shul after here.
The nobleste of the Grekes that ther were
Upon hir shuldres carieden the bere,
With slake pas, and eyen rede and wete,
Thurghout the citee, by the maister-strete,
That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
Right of the same is al the strete y-wrye.
Upon the right hond wente old Egeus,
And on that other side duk Theseus,
With vessels in hir hand of gold wel fyn,
Al ful of hony, milk, and blood, and wyn;
Eek Palamon, with ful greet companye;
And after that cam woful Emelye,
With fir in honde, as was that tyme the gyse,
To do th'office of funeral servise.
Heigh labour, and ful greet apparaillynge
Was at the service and the fir-makynge,
That with his grene top the heven raughte,
And twenty fadme of brede the armes straughte;
This is to seyn, the bowes were so brode.
Of stree first ther was leyd ful many a lode.
But how the fir was maked up on highte,
And eek the names how the treës highte,
As ook, fir, birch, asp, alder, holm, popler,
Wilow, elm, plane, ash, box, chasteyn, lind, laurer,

2057ff. **That with his grene top.** In the *Teseide*, xi. 19, and the *Thebaïd*, vi. 85f., this description applies to the grove cut down by Theseus; and such appears to be the case here. Previous editors, I judge *ex silentio*, have made the clauses modify 'fir-makynge,' used by metonomy for 'pyre'; but Chaucer can hardly have misunderstood his original so grossly. The passage requires a couplet between 2056 and 2057 in which the grove should be mentioned. Chaucer, composing rapidly, forgot to put it in.

Mapul, thorn, beech, hasel, ew, whippeltre,
How they weren feld, shal nat be told for me;
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,
Disherited of hir habitacioun,
In which they woneden in reste and pees,
Nýmphes, Faunes, and Amadrides;
Ne how the bestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for fere, whan the wode was falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was nat wont to seen the sonne bright;
Ne how the fir was couched first with stree,
And than with drye stokkes cloven a three,
And than with grene wode and spicerye,
And than with cloth of gold and with perrye,
And gerlandes hangyng with ful many a flour,
The mirre, th'encens, with al so greet odour;
Ne how Arcite lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
Ne how that Emelye, as was the gyse,
Putte in the fir of funeral servise;
Ne how she swowned whan maad was the fir,
Ne what she spak, ne what was hir desir;
Ne what jewels men in the fire caste,
Whan that the fir was greet and brente faste;
Ne how som caste hir sheeld, and som hir spere,
And of hir vestiments, whiche that they were,
And cuppes ful of wyn, and milk, and blood,
Into the fir, that brente as it were wood;
Ne how the Grekes with an huge route
Thrýës riden al the fir aboute
Upon the left hand, with a loud shoutynge,
And thryës with hir speres claterynge;
And thryës how the ladies gonne crye;
Ne how that lad was homward Emelye;

Ne how Arcite is brent to asshen colde;
Ne how that liche-wake was y-holde
Al thilke nyght, ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes, ne kepe I nat to seye;
Who wrastleth best naked, with oille enoynt,
Ne who that bar hym best, in no disjoynt.
I wol nat tellen eek how that they goon
Hoom til Athenes whan the pley is doon.
But shortly to the poynt than wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.
By processe and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
Al stynted is the mournyng and the teres
Of Grekes. By oon general assent,
Than semed me ther was a parlement
At Athenes, upon certeyn poynts and cas;
Among the whiche poynts y-spoken was
To have with certeyn contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeisaunce.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Leet senden after gentil Palamon,
Unwist of hym what was the cause and why;
But in his blake clothes sorwefully
He cam at his comaundement in hye.
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye.
Whan they were set, and hust was al the place,
And Theseus abiden hadde a space
Er any word cam from his wise brest,
His eyen sette he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked stille,
And after that right thus he seyde his wille.
'The Firste Moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the faire cheyne of love,

2129–2182. Here Theseus proves somewhat too elaborately that all earthly things, though proceeding from an eternal Crea-

Greet was th'effect, and heigh was his entente;
Wel wiste he why, and what therof he mente;
For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fir, the eyr, the water, and the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee;
That same Prince and that Moevere,' quod he,
'Hath stablissed, in this wrecched world adoun,
Certeyne dayes and duracioun
To al that is engendred in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
Al mowe they yet tho dayes wel abregge;
Ther needeth non auctoritee t'allegge,
For it is preved by experience,
But that me list declaren my sentence.
Than may men by this ordre wel discerne,
That thilke Moevere stable is and eterne.
Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every part deryveth from his hool.
For nature hath nat take his biginnyng
Of no partye ne cantel of a thyng,
But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,
Descendyng so, til it be corrumpable.
And therfore of his wise purveiaunce,
He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,

tor, have only a limited duration. We may not rebel against this ordinance even in the case of a friend.

Chaucer uses freely his own translation of Boethius in this argument. 2129–31. See Boethius, ii. met. 8, where the Platonic notion is set forth, that the universe holds together only by the principle of love.

2136–44. All things are limited in duration. Ibid. iv. pr. 6.

2145–52. God is eternal, for a transitory creation implies an eternal creator, as the imperfect, the perfect, or the part, the whole. Ibid. iii. pr. 10. The argument is an ingenious one, but I fancy that long before l. 2200, Palamon wished that Theseus would come to the point.

That speces of thynges and progressiouns
Shullen endure by successiouns,
And nat eterne, with-outen any lye:
This maistow understonde and seen at eye.
'Lo the ook, that hath so long a norisshynge
Fro tyme that it first bigynneth sprynge,
And hath so long a lyf, as we may see,
Yet at the laste wasted is the tree.
'Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
Under our feet, on which we trede and goon,
Yit wasteth it, as it lyth by the weye.
The brode river somtyme wexeth dreye.
The grete tounes see we wane and wende.
Than may ye see that al this thyng hath ende.
'Of man and womman seen we wel also,
That nedeth in oon of thise termes two,
This is to seyn, in youthe or elles age,
He moot ben deed, the kyng as shal a page;
Som in his bed, som in the depe see,
Som in the large feeld, as men may se.
Ther helpeth noght, al goth that ilke weye.
Than may I seyn that al this thyng moot deye.
What maketh this but Jupiter the kyng?
The which is prince and cause of alle thyng,
Convertyng al unto his propre welle,
From which it is deryved, sooth to telle.
And here-agayns no creature on lyve
Of no degree availleth for to stryve.
'Thanne is it wisdom, as it thynketh me,
To maken vertu of necessitee,
And take it wel, that we may nat eschue,
And namely that to us alle is due.
And whoso gruccheth ought, he doth folye,
And rebel is to hym that al may gye.

And certeynly a man hath most honour
To dyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his gode name;
Than hath he doon his freend, ne hym, no shame.
And gladder oghte his freend ben of his deeth,
Whan with honour up-yolden is his breeth,
Than whan his name apalled is for age;
For al forgeten is his vasselage.
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame,
To dyen whan that he is best of name.
The contrarie of al this is wilfulnesse.
Why grucchen we? why have we hevynesse,
That good Arcite, of chivalrye flour
Departed is, with duetee and honour
Out of this foule prison of this lyf?
Why grucchen heer his cosyn and his wyf
Of his welfare that loved hem so wel?
Can he hem thank? nay, God woot, never a del,
That bothe his soule and eek hemself offende,
And yet they mowe hir lustes nat amende.
'What may I conclude of this longe serie,
But after wo I rede us to be merie,
And thanken Jupiter of al his grace?
And er that we departen from this place,
I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
O parfyt joye, lastyng evermo:
And looketh now, wher most sorwe is her-inne,
Ther wol we first amenden and bigynne.
'Suster,' quod he, 'this is my fulle assent,
With al th'avys heer of my parlement,
That gentil Palamon, your owne knyght,
That serveth yow with wille, herte, and myght,
And ever hath doon, syn that ye first hym knewe,
That ye shul, of youre grace, upon hym rewe,

And taken hym for housbonde and for lord:
Leen me youre hond, for this is our accord.
Lat see now of your wommanly pitee.
He is a kynges brother sone, pardee;
And, though he were a povre bacheler,
Syn he hath served yow so many a yeer,
And had for yow so greet adversitee,
It moste been considered, leveth me;
For gentil mercy oghte to passen right.'
Than seyde he thus to Palamon ful right;
'I trowe ther nedeth litel sermonyng
To make yow assente to this thyng.
Com neer, and tak your lady by the hond.'
Betwixen hem was maad anon the bond,
That highte matrimoigne or mariage,
By al the counseil and the baronage.
And thus with alle blisse and melodye
Hath Palamon y-wedded Emelye.
And God, that al this wyde world hath wroght,
Sende hym his love, that hath it dere a-boght.
For now is Palamon in alle wele,
Livyng in blisse, in richesse, and in hele;
And Emelye hym loveth so tendrely,
And he hir serveth also gentilly,
That never was ther no word hem bitwene
Of jelousie, or any other tene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelye;
And God save al this faire compaignye!

Here is ended the knyghtes tale.

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

Here bigynneth the Nonne Preestes Tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote

A POVRE wydwe somdel stope in age,
Was whilom dwellyng in a narwe cotage,
Biside a grove, stondyng in a dale.
This wydwe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Syn thilke day that she was last a wyf,
In pacience ladde a ful symple lyf,
For litel was hir catel and hir rente;
By housbondrie of such as God hir sente,
She fond hirself, and eek hir doghtren two.
Three large sowes hadde she, and namo,
Three kyn and eek a sheep that highte Malle.
Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir halle,
In which she eet ful many a sclendre meel.
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte;
Hir diete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir never sik;
Attempre dyete was al hir phisik,
And exercise, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir nothyng for to daunce,
N'apoplexie shente nat hir heed;
No wyn ne drank she, neither whit ne reed;
Hir bord was served most with whit and blak,
Milk and broun breed, in which she fond no lak,
Seynd bacoun, and somtyme an ey or tweye,
For she was as it were a maner deye.

A yerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dich withoute,
In which she hadde a cok, hight Chauntecleer,
In al the land of crowying n'as his peer.
His vois was merier than the merye orgon
On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon;
Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge,
Than is a clokke, or an abbey orlogge.
By nature knew he ech ascencioun
Of equinoxial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene were ascended,
Than crew he, that it myghte nat ben amended.
His comb was redder than the fyn coral,
And batailled, as it were a castel wal.
His bile was blak, and as the jeet it shoon;
Lyk asur were his legges, and his toon;
His nayles whiter than the lilie flour,
And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce
Sevene hennes, for to doon al his plesaunce,
Whiche were his sustres and his paramours,
And wonder lyk to him, as of colours.
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.
Curteys she was, discreet, and debonaire,
And compaignable, and bar hirself so faire,
Syn thilke day that she was seven nyght old,
That trewely she hath the herte in hold
Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith;
He loved hir so, that wel hym was therwith.
But such a joye was it to here hem synge,
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to sprynge,

37. **Degrees fiftene.** One ascension of the equinoctial, l. 35, one hour.

In swete accord, 'My lief is faren in londe.'
For thilke tyme, as I have understonde,
Bestes and briddes coude speke and synge.
And so bifel, that in a dawenynge,
As Chauntecleer among his wyves alle
Sat on his perche, that was in the halle,
And next hym sat this faire Pertelote,
This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreem is drecched sore.
And whan that Pertelote thus herde hym rore,
She was agast, and seyde, 'O herte deere,
What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?
Ye been a verray sleper, fy for shame!'
And he answerde and seyde thus, 'Madame,
I pray yow, that ye take it nat agrief:
By God, me mette I was in swich meschief
Right now, that yet myn herte is sore afright.
Now God,' quod he, 'my sweven rede aright,
And keep my body out of foul prisoun!
Me mette, how that I romed up and doun
Withinne our yerde, wher as I saugh a beest,
Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areest
Upon my body, and wolde han had me deed.
His colour was bitwixe yelwe and reed;

59. Prof. Skeat has found their song, which runs as follows:

"*My lefe is faren in lond;*
Allas why is she so?
And I am so sore bound
I may not come her to.
She hath my hert in hold,
Wherever she ryde or go,
With trew loue a thousand-fold."
The Athenæum, Oct. 24, 1896, p. 566.

I owe the reference to Miss Petersen's *On the Sources*, etc., p. 92, note.

Compare the Pardoner's song, "*Come hider love to me*," *Prol.* 672.

And tipped was his tail, and bothe his eres
With blak, unlyk the remenant of his heres;
His snowte smal, with glowyng eyen tweye.
Yet of his look for fere almost I deye;
This caused me my gronyng, doutelees.'
'Avoy!' quod she, 'fy on yow, hertelees!
Allas!' quod she, 'for, by that God above,
Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love;
I can nat love a coward, by my feith.
For certes, what so any womman seith,
We alle desiren if it myghte be,
To han housbondes hardy, wise, and free,
And secree, and no nygard, ne no fool,
Ne hym that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avauntour, by that God above!
How dorste ye seyn for shame unto your love,
That any thyng myghte make yow aferd?
Have ye no mannes herte, and han a berd?
Allas! and conne ye been agast of swevenis?
Nothyng, God wot, but vanitee, in sweven is.
Swevenes engendren of repleccioun,
And ofte of fume, and of compleccioun,
Whan humours been to habundant in a wight,
Certes this dreem, which ye han met tonyght,
Cometh of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede *colera*, pardee,
Which causeth folk to dremen in here dremes
Of arwes, and of fir with rede lemes,

104. **fume.** Fumes are due to repletion whether in food or drink.

108. **rede colera.** Red humor arises from excess of bile and blood in the system. It causes fiery and extravagant dreams, as melancholic humor, l. 113, brings black dreams. See *Prol.*, l. 420, note. Pertelote finds that Chauntecleer suffers from both disorders, l. 126, for he dreams both red and black, l. 82f.

Of rede bestes, that they wol hem bite,
Of contek, and of whelpes grete and lyte;
Right as the humour of malencolye
Causeth ful many a man, in sleep, to crye,
For fere of blake beres, or boles blake,
Or elles, blake develes wole hym take.
Of othere humours coude I telle also,
That werken many a man in sleep ful wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.
'Lo Caton, which that was so wys a man,
Seyde he nat thus, ne do no fors of dremes?
Now, sire,' quod she, 'whan we flee fro the bemes,
For Goddes love, as tak som laxatyf;
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I counseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere, and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and for ye shul nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apothecarie,
I shal myself to herbes techen yow,
That shul ben for your hele, and for your prow;
And in our yerd tho herbes shal I fynde,
The whiche han of hir propretee, by kynde,
To purgen yow bynethe, and eek above.
Forget not this, for Goddes owne love!
Ye been ful colerik of complecioun.
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours hote;
And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote,
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu, that may be youre bane.
A day or two ye shul have digestyves
Of wormes, er ye take your laxatyves,

121. do no force of dremes. *Somnia ne cures.* Dionysius Cato, *De Moribus*, ii. dist. 32.

Of lauriol, centaure, and fumetere,
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of catapuce, or of gaytres beryis,
Of erbe yve, growyng in our yerd, ther mery is;
Pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem in.
Be mery, housbond, for your fader kyn!
Dredeth no dreem; I can say yow namore.'
'Madame,' quod he, '*graunt mercy* of your lore.
But natheles, as touchyng daun Catoun,
That hath of wisdom such a gret renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
By God, men may in olde bookes rede
Of many a man, more of auctoritee
Than ever Caton was, so moot I thee,
That al the revers seyn of this sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significaciouns,
As wel of joye as of tribulaciouns
That folk enduren in this lyf present.
Ther nedeth make of this noon argument;
The verray preve sheweth it in dede.
Oon of the gretteste auctours that men rede

146. **Of erbe.** To be slurred together in reading, as the unaccented part of the first foot. So 147, 'Pekk'm.'

164. **Oon of the gretteste auctours.** In Cicero, *De Divinitione*, i. c. 27, the two following stories are found. A recent study makes it appear highly probable that Chaucer took them from the commentary of Robert Holkot *Super Libros Sapientiæ*. They there occur in connection with a general treatment of dreams, which may have suggested this whole digression, ll. 102–336. Holkot took the present anecdotes not from Cicero direct, but from the compilation of Valerius Maximus (*Facta et Dicta*, i. 7). See Miss Petersen's monograph *On the Sources of the Nonne Prestes Tale*, Boston, 1898, pp. 103ff. In this case

Seith thus, that whilom two felawes wente
On pilgrymage, in a ful good entente;
And happed so, they come into a toun,
Wheras ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage,
That they ne founde as muche as o cotage,
In which they bothe myghte y-logged be.
Wherfor they mosten, of necessitee,
As for that nyght, departen compaignye;
And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,
And took his loggyng as it wolde falle.
That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;
That other man was logged wel y-nough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.
And so bifel, that, long er it were day,
This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felawe gan upon hym calle,
And seyde, "Allas! for in an oxes stalle
This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye.
Now help me, dere brother, or I dye;
In alle haste com to me," he sayde.
This man out of his sleep for fere abrayde;
But whan that he was wakned of his sleep,
He turned hym, and took of this no keep;
Hym thoughte his dreem n'as but a vanitee.
Thus twyës in his slepyng dremed he.
And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
Cam, as hym thoughte, and seyde, "I am now slawe;
Bihold my bloody woundes, depe and wyde!
Arise up erly in the morwe-tyde,

the complimentary epithet is probably for the mediocre Valerius, and quite beyond his deserts.

"And at the west gate of the toun," quod he,
"A carte ful of donge ther shaltow see,
In which my body is hid ful prively;
Do thilke carte arresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn;"
And tolde hym every poynt how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful trewe;
For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way;
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.
The hostiler answerde hym anon,
And seyde, "Sire, your felawe is agon,
As sone as day he wente out of the toun."
This man gan falle in gret suspecioun,
Remembryng on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wolde he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong-carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in that same wise
As ye han herd the dede man devyse;
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and justice of this felonye:—
"My felawe mordred is this same nyght,
And in this carte he lith gapyng upright.
I crye out on the ministres," quod he,
"That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
Harrow! allas! her lith my felawe slayn!"
What sholde I more unto this tale sayn?

222. gapyng upright. This grim phrase had already been used by Chaucer to describe death itself. *Knight's T.*, l. 1150:

"*The colde Deeth, with mouth gapyng upright.*"

The peple out-sterte, and cast the cart to grounde,
And in the myddel of the dong they founde
The dede man that mordred was al newe.
O blisful God, that art so just and trewe!
Lo, how that thou biwreyest mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that se we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhomynable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled be;
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or three,
Mordre wol out, this 's my conclusioun.
And right anoon, ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore hym pyned,
And eek the hostiler so sore engyned,
That thay biknewe hir wikkednesse anoon,
And were anhanged by the nekke-boon.
'Here may men seen that dremes been to drede.
And certes, in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
— I gabbe nat, so have I joye or blis, —
Two men that wolde han passed over see,
For certeyn cause, into a fer contree,
If that the wynd ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie,
That stood ful mery upon an haven-side.
But on a day, agayn the eventyde,
The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.
Jolif and glad they wente unto hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille;
But herkneth! to that oo man fel a greet mervaille.

256. See Appendix.

That oon of hem, in slepyng as he lay,
Hym mette a wonder dreem, agayn the day;
Hym thoughte a man stood by his beddes side,
And hym comaunded, that he sholde abyde,
And seyde hym thus, "if thou tomorwe wende,
Thou shalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende."
He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
And preyde hym his viage for to lette;
As for that day, he preyde hym to abyde.
His felawe, that lay by his beddes side,
Gan for to laughe, and scorned him ful faste.
"No dreem," quod he, "may so myn herte agaste,
That I wol lette for to do my thynges.
I sette not a straw by thy dremynges,
For swevenes been but vanitees and japes.
Men dreme alday of owles or of apes,
And of many a mase therwithal;
Men dreme of thyng that never was ne shal.
But sith I see that thou wolt heer abyde,
And thus forslewthen wilfully thy tyde,
God wot it reweth me; and have good day."
And thus he took his leve, and wente his way.
But er that he hadde halfe his cours y-seyled,
N'oot I nat why, ne what myschaunce it eyled,
But casuelly the shippes botme rente,
And ship and man under the water wente
In sighte of othere shippes it biside,
That with hem seyled at the same tyde.
And therfor, faire Pertelote so dere,
By swiche ensamples olde maistow lere,

258. **agayn the day.** Morning dreams were said to be true: —

"*But if when morn is near our dreams are true.*"
Inf. xxvi. 7.

That no man sholde been to recchelees
Of dremes, for I sey thee, doutelees,
That many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.
'Lo, in the lyf of seynt Kenelm, I rede,
That was Kenulphus' sone, the noble kyng
Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thyng;
A litel er he was mordred, on a day,
His mordre in his avisioun he say.
His norice hym expouned every del
His sweven, and bad hym for to kepe hym wel
For traisoun; but he n'as but seven yeer old,
And therfore litel tale hath he told
Of any dreem, so holy was his herte.
By God, I hadde lever than my sherte
That ye had rad his legende, as have I.
Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun
In Affrike of the worthy Cipioun,
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been
Warnyng of thynges that men after seen.
And forthermore, I pray yow looketh wel
In the Olde Testament, of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see
Wher dremes ben somtyme, I sey nat alle,
Warnyng of thynges that shul after falle.

290. Kenelm, the seven year old king of Mercia, fell a victim in the year 821, to the ambition of his sister Quendrith; so the story is told by all the twelfth century chroniclers; his premonitory dream is a later addition of the legend writers.

298. litel tale hath he told, paid little attention to.

303. Macrobius edited rather than wrote the *Somnium Scipionis*, a work of Cicero's which the reader will find translated in Longfellow's "Illustrations" to the *Inferno* and in abstract by Chaucer in *The Parlement of Foules*, ll. 36–84.

Loke of Egipt the kyng, daun Pharao,
His bakere and his boteler also,
Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes.
Who so wol seken actes of sondry remes,
May rede of dremes many a wonder thyng.
'Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde kyng,
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified he sholde anhanged be?
Lo heer Andromacha, Ectores wyf,
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,
She dremed on the same nyght biforn,
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente into bataille;
She warned hym, but it myghte nat availle;
He wente for to fighte natheles,
But he was slayn anoon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
That I shal han of this avisioun
Adversitee; and I seye forthermore,
That I ne telle of laxatyves no store,
For they ben venimous, I woot right wel;
I hem defye, I love hem never a del.
'Now let us speke of mirthe, and stynte al this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,

318. Chaucer had already told **Cresus' story** at length in the Monk's Tale, using the version of the *Roman de la Rose*, ll. 6312 ff.

321. Andromache's dream does not appear in Homer. All the mediæval Troy books take the incident from the then authoritative *Dares*, c. xxiv. "*At ubi tempus pugnæ supervenit, Andromache uxor Hectoris in somnis vidit Hectorum non debere in pugnam procedere; et cum ad eum visum refert, Hector muliebria verba abicit.*"

333. Chauntecleer now comes to the main point, that he refuses to take his medicine. He has assuredly given reasons enough for so doing.

Of o thyng God hath sent me large grace;
For whan I see the beautee of your face,
Ye been so scarlet-reed about youre yën,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen;
For, also siker as *In principio*,
Mulier est hominis confusio;
Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is —
Womman is mannes joye and al his blis.
. . . . . .
I am so ful of joye and of solas
That I defye bothe sweven and dreem.'
And with that word he fley doun fro the beem,
For it was day, and eek his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he hadde founde a corn, lay in the yerd.
Roial he was, he was namore aferd;
. . . . . .
He looketh as it were a grym leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and doun,
Hym deyned not to sette his foot to grounde.
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn y-founde,
And to hym rennen thanne his wyves alle.
Thus roial, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture;
And after wol I telle his aventure.
Whan that the month in which the world bigan,
That highte March, whan God first maked man,
Wás compleet, and passed were also
— Syn March bigan — thritty dayes and two,
Bifel that Chauntecleer, in al his pryde,
His seven wyves walkyng by his side,

368. The creation, according to mediæval chronology, took place at the vernal equinox.

369f. March was complete and thirty-two more days had passed, — a roundabout way of saying that it was May 3.

Caste up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne
Twenty degrees and oon, and somwhat more.
He knew by kynde, and by noon other lore,
That it was pryme, and crew with blisful stevene.
'The sonne,' he sayde, 'is clomben up on hevene
Fourty degrees and oon, and more, y-wis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they synge,
And se the fresshe floures how they sprynge;
Ful is myn hert of revel and solas.'
But sodeynly hym fil a sorweful cas;
For ever the latter ende of joye is wo.
Got woot that worldly joye is sone ago;
And if a rethor coude faire endite,
He in a cronycle saufly myghte it write,
As for a sovereyn notabilitee.
Now every wys man, lat hym herkne me;
This storie is also trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,
That wommen holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
A colfox, ful of sly iniquitee,
That in the grove hadde woned yeres three,
By heigh imaginacioun forn-cast,
The same nyght thurghout the hegges brast
Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire
Was wont, and eek his wyves, to repaire;

379. Chauntecleer, as a natural-born astronomer, l. 376, knew the hour by the altitude of the sun, 41°, or 9 o'clock.

392. **the book of Launcelot de Lake.** The great prose romance of Lancelot, in spite of its credit with the women of Chaucer's time, is full of incredible adventures. The reader may best get an idea of it from Malory's *Morte Darthur*, bks. vi. and xi.–xxi., for which it served as source.

And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
Til it was passed undern of the day,
Waityng his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle
As gladly doon thise homicydes alle,
That in await liggen to mordre men.
O false mordrer, lurkyng in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon!
False dissimilour, O Greek Sinon,
That broghtest Troye al outrely to sorwe!
O Chauntecleer, acursed be that morwe,
That thou into that yerd fleigh fro the bemes!
Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy dremes,
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that God forwot mot nedes be,
After the opinioun of certeyn clerkis.
Witnesse on hym, that any perfit clerk is,
That in scole is gret altercacioun
In this matere, and greet disputisoun,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand men.
But I ne can not bulte it to the bren,
As can the holy doctour Augustyn,
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardyn,
Whether that Goddes worthy forwityng
Streyneth me nedely for to doon a thyng, —

407 ff. **Scariot.** Judas Iscariot. **Genilon.** Ganelon, the traitor, who betrayed Roland at Roncevaux. **Sinon.** The spy, who persuaded the Trojans to bring the wooden horse into the city. *Æneid*, ii. 259.

421. **Augustyn.** See Prol., l. 187, note.

422. **Boece.** Boethius. See Introduction, p. xiv, note.

"Thomas Bradwardine was Proctor in the University of Oxford in the year 1325, and afterwards became Divinity Professor and Chancellor of the University. His chief work is, 'On the Cause of God' (*De Causa Dei*)." S.

These writers had treated elaborately of the problem of free will and predestination.

Nedely clepe I symple necessitee;
Or elles, if free choys be graunted me
To do that same thyng, or do it noght,
Though God forwot it, er that it was wroght;
Or if his wityng streyneth never a deel
But by necessitee condicionel.
I wol not han to do of swich matere;
My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his counseil of his wyf, with sorwe,
To walken in the yerd upon that morwe
That he hadde met the dreem that I you tolde.
Wommennes counseils been ful ofte colde;
Wommannes counseil broghte us first to wo,
And made Adam fro paradys to go,
Ther as he was ful mery, and wel at ese.
But for I n'oot, to whom it myght displese,
If I counseil of wommen wolde blame,
Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.
Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich matere,
And what thay seyn of wommen ye may here.
Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne;
I can noon harme of no womman divyne.
Faire in the sond, to bathe hire merily,
Lyth Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,

430. **necessitee conditionel.** Boethius, v. pr. 6: "*For certes ther ben two maneris of necessites: that oon necessite is symple, as thus; that it byhovith by necessite that alle men ben mortal or dedly; anothir necessite is condicionel as thus; yif thou wost that a man walketh, it behovith by necessite that he walke.*" I. e., God does not compel our wills, but since all future things are present to him, he foresees that which we are going to do voluntarily. This insoluble problem evidently had its fascination for Chaucer. He treated it at length in *Troilus and Chriseyde*, iv., ll. 967ff. — to the detriment of the story. Here, fortunately, he merely glances at it before telling on his tale of a cock.

Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free
Song merier than the mermayde in the see
— For Phisiologus seith sikerly,
How that they syngen wel and merily, —
And so bifel, that, as he caste his yë
Among the wortes, on a boterflye,
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
Nothyng ne liste hym thanne for to crowe,
But cride anon, 'cok, cok,' and up he sterte,
As man that was affrayed in his herte;
For naturelly a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never erst hadde seyn it with his yë.
This Chauntecleer, whan he gan hym espye,
He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
Seyde, 'Gentil Sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?
Be ye affrayed of me that am your freend?
Now certes, I were worse than a feend,
If I to yow wolde harm or vileinye.
I am nat come your counseil for t'espye;
But trewely, the cause of my comynge
Was only for to herkne how that ye synge.
For trewely ye have as mery a stevene,
As eny aungel hath, that is in hevene;

451. **Phisiologus.** A Latin work by one Theobaldus, date early but unknown, which contains much amusing unnatural natural history concerning the nature of beasts allegorically interpreted. It is the ultimate source of the English *Bestiary*, which thus speaks of the mermaid: —

> "*mirie ge* (she) *singeð ðis mere* (mermaid)
> *and haveð many stefnes* (voices),
> *many and ille* (shrill);
> *Oc it ben wel ille,*
> *sipmen* (sailors) *here steringe forgeten*
> *for hire stefeninge.*"
> Morris, *An Old English Miscellany.* E. E. T. S.

459ff. One recognizes his natural enemy, **contrarie**, at first sight.

Therwith ye han in musik more felynge
Than hadde Boece, or any that can synge.
My lord your fader — God his soule blesse! —
And eek your moder, of hir gentilesse,
Han in myn hous y-been, to my gret ese;
And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese.
But for men speke of syngyng, I wol saye,
So mote I brouke wel myn eyen tweye,
Save yow, I herde never man so synge,
As dide your fader in the morwenynge;
Certes, it was of herte, al that he song.
And for to make his voys the more strong,
He wolde so peyne hym, that with both his yën
He moste wynke, so loude he wolde cryen,
And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,
And strecche forth his nekke long and smal.
And eek he was of swich discrecioun
That ther n'as no man in no regioun
That hym in song or wisdom myghte passe.
I have weel rad in daun Burnel the Asse,
Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,
For that a prestes sone yaf hym a knok
Upon his leg, whil he was yong and nyce,
He made hym for to lese his benefice.
But certeyn, ther n'is no comparisoun
Bitwix the wisdom and discrecioun
Of youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
Now syngeth, sire, for seynte charitee,

474. **Boece.** Boethius wrote a treatise, *De Musica.*

492. **daun Burnel the Ass.** A satirical poem, *Burnellus seu Speculum Stultorum*, written by Nigellus Wireker in the reign of Richard I., published in Wright's *Anglo-Latin Satirists.*

496. Made him lose it by failing to crow and awake the priest on morning of the ordination.

Lat se, conne ye your fader countrefete?'
This Chauntecleer his wynges gan to bete,
As man that coude his tresoun nat espye,
So was he ravisshed with his flaterye.
Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour
Is in your courtes, and many a losengeour,
That plesen yow wel more, by my feith,
Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith.
Redeth Ecclesiaste of flatterye;
Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye
This Chauntecleer stood hye upon his toos,
Strecchyng his nekke, and held his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowe loude for the nones;
And daun Russel the fox sterte up at ones,
And by the gargat hente Chauntecleer,
And on his bak toward the wode hym beer,
For yet ne was ther no man that hym sewed.
O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!
Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!
Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes!
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.
O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,
Syn that thy servant was this Chauntecleer,
And in thy service dide al his poweer,
More for delit, than world to multiplye,
Why woltestow suffre hym on thy day to dye?
O Gaufred, dere mayster soverayn,
That, whan thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn

509. *Ecclesiasticus* in the *Apocrypha*, c. xii. 10, 11, 16.

527. **Gaufred.** Geoffrey de Vinsauf, writer of an art of poetry. *Nova Poetria*, gives, as an example of the plaintive style, a complaint against Friday, the day on which Richard I. was shot. The poem is of a ridiculously inflated sort. Chaucer here makes fun of it.

With shot, compleynedest his deth so sore,
Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy lore,
The Friday fer to chide, as diden ye?
— For on a Friday soothly slayn was he; —
Than wolde I shewe yow how that I coude pleyne
For Chauntecleres drede, and for his peyne.
Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun
Was nevere of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd —
Whan he hadde hent kyng Priam by the berd,
And slayn hym — as saith us *Eneydos* —
As maden alle the hennes in the clos,
Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighte,
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
Whan that hir housbond hadde lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns hadde brent Cartage,
She was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fir she sterte,
And brende hirselven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so criden ye,
As, whan that Nero brende the citee
Of Rome, criden senatoures wyves,
For that hir housbondes losten alle hir lyves;
Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I torne to my tale agayn.
This sely wydwe, and eek hir doghtres two,
Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,
And out at dores sterten they anoon,
And syen the fox toward the grove goon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away;
And criden, 'Out! harrow! and weylaway!

537. **streite swerd.** Drawn sword. See *Æneid*, ii. 333.

543. Hasdrubal, king of Carthage at the time of its capture by the Romans, B. C. 146.

Ha, ha, the fox!' and after hym they ran,
And eek with staves many another man;
Ranne Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
And Malkyn, with a distaf in hir hand;
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges
Sóre aferd for berkyng of the dogges
And shoutyng of the men and wommen eke,
They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breke.
They yelleden as feendes doon in helle;
The dokes criden as men wolde hem quelle;
The gees for fere flowen over the trees;
Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees;
So hidous was the noyse, a! *ben'dic'te!*
Certes, he Jakke Straw, and his meynee,
Ne made never shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Flemyng kille,
As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras they broghten bemes, and of box,
Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and pouped,
And therwithal thay shryked and they houped;
It semed as that heven sholde falle.
Now, goode men, I pray yow herkneth alle!
Lo, how fortune turneth sodeynly
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy!
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
In al his drede, unto the fox he spak,
And seyde, 'Sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet sholde I seyn — as wys God helpe me, —

574. "The chronicler Walshingham relates how in 1381, Jakke Straw and his men killed many Flemings 'cum clamore consueto.'" S. An anonymous poet writing of the same insurrection, tells of the shouts of the rebels as they slew Archbishop Sudbury, —

"*Laddus loude thay lo3e* (the lads laughed loud) *clamantes voce sonora,*
The bisschop wen thay slo3e."

T. Wright, *Political Poems* (Roll's Series), i. 225.

Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle!
A verray pestilence upon yow falle!
Now am I come unto this wodes side,
Maugree your heed, the cok shal heer abyde;
I wol hym ete in feith, and that anon.'
The fox answerde, 'In feith, it shal be don,' —
And as he spak that word, al sodeynly
This cok brak from his mouth deliverly,
And heighe upon a tree he fleigh anon.
And whan the fox saugh that he was y-gon,
'Allas!' quod he, 'O Chauntecleer, allas!
I have to yow,' quod he, 'y-doon trespas,
In-as-muche as I maked yow aferd,
Whan I yow hente, and broghte out of the yerd;
But, sire, I dide it in no wikke entente;
Com doun, and I shal telle yow what I mente.
I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so.'
'Nay, than,' quod he, 'I shrewe us bothe two,
And first I shrewe myself, bothe blood and bones,
If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.
Thou shalt namore, thurgh thy flaterye
Do me to synge and wynken with myn yë.
For he that wynketh, whan he sholde see,
Al wilfully, God lat hym never thee!'
'Nay,' quod the fox, 'but God yive him meschaunce,
That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
That jangleth whan he sholde holde his pees.'
Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,
And necligent, and truste on flaterye.
But ye that holden this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,
Taketh the moralitee, good men.

For Seynt Paul seith, that al that writen is,
To our doctryne it is y-write, y-wis.
Taketh the fruyt, and lat the chaf be stille.
Now, goode God, if that it be thy wille,
As seith my lord, so make us alle good men;
And brynge us to his heighe blisse. Amen.

Here is ended the Nonne preestes tale.

621. **Seynt Paul seith.** 2 Timothy iii. 16. As Chaucer read it, "*Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata, utilis est ad docendum, ad arguendum, ad corripiendum, ad erudiendum in justitia.*"

625. **my lord.** William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1381 to 1396, was the Nonne Preestes lord.

APPENDIX OF VARIOUS READINGS

THE text of the present edition is based on the seven MSS. published by the Chaucer Society. No wholly satisfactory classification of these MSS. has ever been made;[1] and even the text of Professor Skeat's noble edition is wholly unsystematic in the admission of various readings. I have adopted the following classification, conscious of its provisional nature, but feeling that it is at least conservative, and as near the truth as our present knowledge permits us to approach.

THE A GROUP. I shall designate by this letter the type of MSS. represented by the Ellesmere, Hengwrt, and Cambridge MSS. printed on the left-hand page of the Six-Text edition. These MSS. are the oldest and best of the seven; and their agreement should determine all matters of grammar and orthography. The Ellesmere, the best MS., serves as the basis of the text. The A group appears to represent Chaucer's first version of the tales.

THE B GROUP consists of the Corpus, Petworth, and Lansdowne MSS. These MSS. are later and inferior to those of the A group, but they come from a version of the tales revised by Chaucer's own hand, as is proved by the arrangement of the tales and the fact that their common reading is frequently preferable metrically to that of A. But B, the original of Cp. Pt. Ln., was already corrupted by careless copying, so that we must observe a certain caution in adopting its readings.

H. This version is represented by the Harleian MS. It offers the most perplexing problems to the critic. In general it is closely related to the B group, but in its characteristic readings it is usually unique. It shows many execrable readings found in no other MS., and clearly chargeable to the carelessness

[1] I have examined carefully Dr. Liddell's tabulation of Zupitza's study of the Pardoner's Prologue and Tale in *Specimens of . . . unprinted MSS. of the Cant. Tales*, part iv., p. xlvii., Chaucer Soc., 1897. I have not been able to use it, because no MS. of the important Dd. group is in print; while I cannot believe that all the extant MSS. come from a single Chaucerian redaction.

of scribes. It occasionally follows Hengwrt alone, and rarely Ellesmere, in good readings, — a relation most difficult to explain. Finally, it contains a considerable number of attractive readings supported by no other MS. In this fact lies its importance to the text critic. Most editors admit these readings to the text on the ground that they represent a revision of the text by Chaucer himself; and in fact certain of these readings, like the *smyteth of myn heed*, Prol. 482, for the *I wol yeve yow myn heed* of A and B bear that interpretation; but far the greater number of emendations in H. affect lines which are already acceptable in A and B. This is particularly true in the case of nine-syllable lines. In fact this minute revision resembles suspiciously the work of the old scribes and modern editors, savoring rather of the pedant than the poet. (*E.g. Nun's Priest's Tale*, l. 370.) It is this quality of H. readings that leads me to believe that they come, not from Chaucer, but from an emendator of some MS. near the B type, but nearer Chaucer's autograph than B; this same editor might have introduced certain readings from a MS. of the A type, lying between Ellesmere and Hengwrt, — this would account for Elles. Hngt. readings in H.; and, finally, a succession of indolent scribes would have introduced the bad readings peculiar to H.

It is impracticable, for obvious reasons, to treat further the genealogy of the MSS.; but the above-mentioned account of their relations immediately suggests a plan for the constitution of the text, which at least has the merit of simplicity and consistency. In the description of the Harleian MS. alone, it differs from accepted views, and here it is fair to say that the burden of proof lies with those who hold that H. readings come from Chaucer.

I have, then, constructed the text upon the following system:—

(1.) The Ellesmere MS. is the basis of the text so far as grammar and spelling are concerned. The rare grammatical emendations of Skeat have been accepted, and the same scholar's normalized spelling partially adopted, with the retention, however, of many Ellesmere spellings, especially y's for i's. It seemed ill-advised to render the page less archaic, with no corresponding advantage to the reader.

(2.) Since B readings represent Chaucer's revision of A, they should be introduced into the text, even when the reading of A is correct, with the exception, of course, of palpable or probable

errors. I have used once or twice the liberty, freely conceded to the editor of a modern poet, of retaining the first or A reading in the text in the rare cases where Chaucer, like many another poet, has revised a line for the worse.

(3.) The reading of H. is never admitted to the text when there is any possibility of standing by that of A or B. When used at all, it is regarded as conjectural emendation, with only the authority due to its antiquity.

I fear lest, without having satisfied the specialist, I shall have already wearied the teacher and scholarly reader, for whom the question of the text, so it be reasonably good, has but a minor interest.

Only the variants with Skeat's edition are registered, and of these only such as affect the sense. This will enable the scholar to control the readings at little inconvenience; while the plan of this book obviously precludes a complete *apparatus criticus*.

THE PROLOGUE

Heading. *Here begynneth*, etc., from A.

49. S. with Hngt. alone om. **in** before **hethenesse**. Pronounce *as'n*.

60. **Armee**. H. Cm. read **ariue**, 'debarkation;' this by an obvious mistaking of the three straight strokes of an 'm' for the similarly formed 'iu.' **Armee** here means a naval expedition, as in Spanish *armada*. (See the *New English Dictionary*, s. v. army.)

74. S. with E. Cm. B om. **ne**; this leaves the end of the line absolutely flat and almost unrhythmical. I read with H. Hngt., for they bring the accent, where it is logically required, upon *he*.

120. S. **sȳnt** (so infra, 509), but this dissyllabic pronunciation has never been established. It appears that since people said *seyntë Venus*, *Leg.* 338, *seynte charitee*, *K. T.* 863, without any feeling that the 'e' was a feminine ending, so they used *seynt*, *seynte*, side by side, according to the accent of the following word. *Seynte* is always permissible before a metrically accented monosyllable or a paroxytone.

134. S. with H. om. **ther**.

179. S. with H. reads **cloisterlees**, which appears to be a mere gloss of the *rechelees* of the rest.

196. S. with E. Cm. H., **y-*wrought*;** and with H. alone om. **ful**.

217. S. with H. Hngt. *And* eek. Read as a nine-syllable line.

252. After this line Hngt. alone inserts —

And yaf a certeyn ferme for the graunt
Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt,

i. e., paid a fixed rent for the exclusive privilege of begging in a certain district. With Dr. Furnivall, I doubt the authenticity of this couplet.

363. S. with H. Were with us eek, *clothed in*, which seems a mere emendation of the incomplete construction.

364. S. with H. om. a before *frat.*

407. S. with H. *knew* wel. Read as a nine-syllable line.

450. S. with E. Hngt. bifore *hir;* H. *byforn;* Cm. B, *toforn.*

520. S. with H. om. this; but pronounce *ensamp'l.*

558. S. with Cp. om. a before *bok.*

741. S. with H. *who so* that; but read *seïth.*

752. S. with H. *to* han *been;* read as a nine-syllable line.

803. S. with H. gladly *with.* The rest, *goodly*, in the sense of kindly, obligingly.

816. S. with H. Pt. *wold*; the rest *wol(n)*, or *wiln*, which appears to attest the reading of the text.

850. S., against all MSS., om. that. It seems certain that we should pronounce *that it was, that t'was.*

Colophon. *Heere endith*, etc., from MS. Sloane, 1685.

THE KNIGHT'S TALE

64. S. with H. n*is.*

116. S. with Hngt. Cp. n*is.*

173. Understand 'live' (see l. 170) as the verb of the clauses. S. reads with B, Hngt. Dwellen this P. and eek A., which seems to me quite as probably a scribe's emendation as Chaucer's.

296. S. with A, H. *thee* utterly, making *I telle thee* parenthetical. I follow B, making *witterly*(certainly) modify *telle.*

321. S. with H. Cm. om. so; but read *were* as a monosyllable.

639. S. *Arcite that is*, with H.; A, B, *Arcita.*

644. B, H. his *courser sterting.* S. reads *sterting* with B, H., but rejects, inconsistently, *his;* A, *a c. startlynge.*

715. S. after, with E., the rest *afterward.* Pronounce *aft'. ward.*

737. S. for *thou shalt*, with H. alone.

750. S. with E. H. Cp. om. **as** before *thou*. Translating 'since thou art a very (*moche*) worthy knight;' the meaning is clearly 'in as much as.'

779. All but H. **To** *chaungen*, an unattractive, but possibly genuine reading.

780. S. against all MSS. *hunter;* but *hunters* is, perhaps, genitive with 'colour' understood.

865. S. with H. Hngt. *knowe;* the **rest**, *knowest.*

909. S. **as** *thus;* following Hngt. Cm. Cp.

1002. S. **Hym** *shal*, with H.; A, Pt. *than(ne)*; Cp. Ln. *that* (sic).

1022. *Explicit*, etc.; this and the other Latin headings are found only in E.

1048. So S. and H.; A, *On the westward in memorie*, followed with slight variations by B. I adopt the reading in the text with some misgivings. It is a mere emendation of a line defective through the copyist's fault; the *westward* **side** *in* of Pt. is more likely to be right.

1121. S. with E. Pt. **and** *a swough;* the rest, *in.* See Glossary, s. v. *swough.*

1172. S. with E. Hngt. *twynes*; Cm. B, *twyned.*

1191. A, B, *was depeynted*, which S. prints *depeynt.* I follow H.

1200. S. **til** *a*, with Hngt. Cm. Cp. probably caught by error from 1204.

1262. S. **In** *a b. and* **in** *a.* All but H. begin the verse with *and*, all but Pt. have the second *and in*, by a scribe's repetition of the initial phrase. We need a compound phrase as in the text, not two phrases, for 'breast-plate' and 'gipoun' are a single idea. We say 'In a coat *and* a waistcoat,' not 'In a coat and *in* a waistcoat.'

1294. S. with B, *Colers of*, but S. in his note prefers *colered.*

1364. Hngt. H. give the text. S. *doughter* **to** with E. Cm. B, but its harshness rules this out. B, *spouse* **to**; S. *spouse* **of.**

1562. S. omits *the* against all MSS. Read *vic'trie*, with an extra syllable before the pause.

1608. S. with H. **in** *shakyng*, an unnecessary emendation, for it is Sampson, not Saturn, who does the shaking. Translate, 'Sampson as he shook.'

1695. Probably a nine-syllable line, *Thát shal bén ordéyn'd.*

1698. S. with H. *slee* (pres. subj.); but we appear to have here an elliptical construction. Either carry over *be*, or supply *sholde*.

1701. S. with H. *fight;* but read with a slur, almost, *fighteth y'r*.

1823f. A, om. The parenthesis seems to be an afterthought of Chaucer's.

1825. S. *And* she *was* with Hngt., caught from 1822; the rest omit. Read as a nine-syllable line.

1826. A, followed by S. *a* furie; the rest, *a* fir.

1872. Probably a nine-syllable line, pronouncing, *clep'n*.

1912. This line must be read with a marked rhetorical pause after *lyf*, to compensate for the lacking unaccented syllable. Such lines are very rare in Chaucer. Tyrwhitt emends without MS. authority *ne may*. It seems to me that *may* [*now*] *no* may have been the reading. The fusion into 'no' is easily accounted for by error of eye or ear.

1943. S. with H. om. for, but the sense appears to be 'since his arms (besides his legs and lower body) had lost vitality, consciousness now remained only in his heart.'

2085. S. with A, *whan men made;* but it is easy to see why Chaucer should have replaced this jangling combination of nasals by the *whan maad was* of B. H.'s *whan* sche *made* has, I think, no authority.

2087. S. with H. *fyr* tho *caste*. Read *firë*, justified by E. Cp. and Chaucerian usage. (See Kittredge, *Obs.*, p. 40.)

2142. S. with E. om. t'; the rest, *tallege, to legge*, etc.

2157. S. with H. *eterne* be and om. any; but *eterne* is adverbial, 'eternally.'

Colophon. *Here is ended*, etc., from E. Hngt.

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

Heading. *Here bigynneth* from E. Hngt.

109. S. with A, *to dreden;* the rest, *dremen*, a reading confirmed by Chaucer's probable original, Holkot — *somniat homo . . . de incendiis*, etc. See Petersen, *On the Sources of the Nonne Prestes Tale*, p. 104.

111. S. with E. *Of* grete; all others, *rede*, which is certainly right, for Pertelote is describing a dream completely 'red.'

146. S. with Ln. that *mery;* Hngt. *they* (sic!) *m.;* the rest, ther

m. Skeat interprets, *erbe yve*, 'that is merry,' that is pleasant to the taste, with the note, that it is extremely nauseous. Such a reading is attractive for its irony, but hardly justifiable against all the good MSS.

157. S. *Than al*, by error of the press.

160. S. om. **of** before *tribulaciouns*, with Hngt. Pt.; the rest, *of tr.*; and the slur is not harsh.

186. S. reads **er** *I* with Cm. Cp. Pt. (Ln. *ar*); E. Hngt. H. or *I*. Chaucer would hardly have abused the rime to the extent of 'ther I lye'—'er I dye.'

212. S. with A om. **gret**; H. *in* **a s.**; B, *in* **gret.**

256. S. against all MSS. om. **herkneth.** The line loses thereby in rhetorical force. Read as an alexandrine (6 accents).

273. S. with H. *And* **eke.** Read as a nine-syllable verse.

369. S. emends **y-***passed* without MS. authority. Read as a nine-syllable verse.

370. H. *also* **tway monthes and dayes** *two*, which is surely the work of a scribe helping Chaucer out of an ambiguous passage.

376. S. with H. A, **And** *knew*; B, **He** *knew*; Chaucer probably corrected 'he' to avoid the three successive 'ands.'

388. S. with H. Cp. *cronique*; the rest *cronycle.*

566. S. with H. **So were they** *fered.* Read with B, *Sore aferd*, as a nine-syllable line. E. Hngt. (badly) *So fered*; Cm. *Forfered.*

Colophon. *Here is ended*, etc., from E. Hngt.

[1] S. = Skeat's "Oxford" Chaucer.
A. = The common reading of E. Hngt. Cm.
B. = The common reading of Cp. Pt. Ln.
H. = Ms. Harleian 7334.

GLOSSARY

NOTE. The glossary has only the strictly practical aim of explaining such words and phrases as the average reader will fail to understand. It did not lie within the scope of the book to treat words and idioms elaborately from the point of view of historical grammar, nor to assume such knowledge on the reader's part. While I have sought accuracy of definition, I have frequently been obliged, chiefly in the rendering of idioms, to rest content with an approximate modern equivalent. Such helps to the understanding of the text, the reader should not accept as literal translations.

The following contractions, besides a few which are self-explanatory, are used: —

P., the Prologue; K., Knight's Tale; N., Nun's Priest's Tale; I., introduction (cited by page).

ger., gerund (the old dative, usually passive, infinitive).
imper., the imperative mood.
impers., impersonal verb.
pp., past participle.
pr., present tense.
pt., preterit tense.
s., singular.
pl., plural.

A, on, (the unaccented form); *a Goddes name*, in God's name, P. 854.

A-, as prefix, *a-day*, in the day, K. 1765; *a-nyght*, K. 184; *a-three*, in three, K. 2076.

Abiden, abide, await, K. 69; pp., K. 2124.

Able, fit, P. 167.

Aboghte (pret. of *abye*) atoned for, K. 1445; pp. *aboght*, suffered for, K. 2242.

Abood, delay, K. 107.

Aboven, above.

Abrayde, started up, awoke, N. 188.

Abregge, shorten, abridge, K. 2141.

Accomplice, accomplish, K. 2006.

Accordant, appropriate to, N. 16; according to, P. 37.

Accord, harmony, N. 59; agreement, P. 838.

Accorde, agree, P. 830; suit, impers., P. 244; pp., accorded, K. 356.

Achat, purchase, P. 571.

Achatours, purchasers, caterers, P. 568.

Actes, acts, histories (as we say the Acts of the Apostles), N. 316.

Adoun, Adonis, K. 1366.

Adoun, adv., down, downwards.

Adrad, pp., in great dread, P. 605.

Afered, pp., in great fear, afraid, K. 660; N. 566; *aferd*, P. 628.

Affecciouns, affection, K. 300.

Affermed, affirmed, fixed, K. 1491.

Affile, to file, polish, P. 712.

Affrayed, terrified, afraid, N. 458.

Afright, in fright, afraid, N. 75.

After, according to, P. 347, K. 1715.

After oon, according to one (quality), equally good, P. 341; according to one standard, equally, K. 923.

Agast, aghast, terrified, K. 1483.

Agaste, hym, was terrified (reflexive object, like *bewailed him, bethought him*), K. 1566.

Agayn, ageyn, adv. and prep., again, against, towards.

Ago, agon, agoon, pp., gone, past, K. 418, 924, 1965.

Agrief; to take a., to take amiss, N. 73.

Al. (a) adj., all; pl. *alle* (the "e" rarely pronounced); *allë*, P. 346, K. 76, 1850, etc.

(b) adv., all, wholly, P. 76.

(c) conj., although, K. 313; *al speke he*, P. 734; *al telle I noght*, K. 1406; *al be that*, although it be that, P. 297.

Alawnts, great boar-hounds, K. 1290.

Alderbest, see *aller*.

Ale-stake, the projecting pole from which hung the sign, or the "bush" of an ale-house, P. 667.

Algate, always, P. 571.

Alighte, pt., alighted, K. 125; pp. *alight*, 722.

Alle and some, collectively and individually, one and all, K. 1329.

Alle, see *al*.

Allegge, to allege, K. 2145.

Aller, *alder*, of all (gen. pl. of *al*); *our aller*, of us all, P. 823; *hir aller*, of them all, P. 586.

Alderbest, best of all, P. 710.

Alliaunce, alliance, K. 2115.

Also, as, P. 730, N. 391; common as well in the modern sense, P. 64; so, K. 2246.

Amadrides, Hamadryads, K. 2070.

Amblere, a horse that ambles, nag, P. 469.

Amonges, amongst, P. 759.

Amorwe, on the morrow, P. 822, K. 763.

Amounteth, amounts to, signifies, K. 1504.

Amyddes, amidst, in the middle, K. 1151.

Anhanged, pp., hung up, N. 242.

Anlas, a short two-edged dagger, P. 357.

Anon, *anoon*, anon, soon, in an instant. P. 32; K. 2007.

Anoynt, anointed, P. 199.

Anyght, at night, K. 184.

Apalled, pp., become pale (through being forgotten) K. 2195.

Apayd, satisfied; *holdeth you apayd*, rest content, K. 1010.

Apes (metaphorically), dupes, gulls, P. 706.

Apparaillynge, preparation, K. 2055.

Appetit, desire, impulse, K. 822; pl., K. 812.

Apyked, trimmed, bedeckt, P. 365.

Aqueynlaunce, acquaintance, P. 245.

Arest, *areest*, seizure, custody, N. 80; K. 452; *in arest* (of a spear), in rest, couched, K. 1744.

Areste, stop, bring to a halt, P. 827.

Arette, ascribe; *that ye n'arette it not my vileinye*, lay it not to my ill-breeding, P. 726.

Aretted, accounted, K. 1871.

Arm-greet, as thick as a man's arm, K. 1287.

Armurers, armorers, K. 1649.

Armypotente, mighty in arms, K. 1124 (from Ital. *armipotente*).

Array, dress, equipage, P. 41, 73; display (personified), K. 1074.

Arrayed, displayed, equipped, K. 1188; laid in rows, arranged, K. 2009.

Arrerage, arrears, P. 602.

Arresten, stop, N. 200, variant of *areste*.

Ars-metrik, arithmetic, K. 1040.

Artow, art thou, K. 293.

Arwes, arrows, P. 104, K. 1500.

As, as if, P. 636, N. 570.

As, before an imperative, softens command to entreaty, K. 1444, 1459, 1467.

As is prefixed to temporal adverbs and adverbial phrases without translatable force.

As nouthe, just now, at present, P. 462; *as now*, K. 1406; *as by way*, K. 433; *as out*, K. 487.

Ascendent, ascendent, the point of the zodiacal circle which is rising above the horizon at a given moment. By it the horoscope was determined, P. 417.

Ashamed, put to shame, K. 1809.

Aslaked (slaked), moderated, K. 902.

Asonder, asunder, P. 491.

Asp, aspen, K. 2063.

Aspect, the astrological relation of a planet to the other planets and stars at a given moment, K. 229.

Aspye, see *espye*.

Assaut, assault, K. 131.

Assayed, tried, K. 953.

Asseged, besieged, K. 23.

Asshen, ashes, K. 2099.

Assise, assize, session (of a court), P. 314.

Assoillyng, absolution, P. 661.

Assuren, confirm, K. 1066.

Asterte, to escape, K. 737; pp. *astert*, K. 733.

Astoned, astonished, K. 1503.

Astored, stored, P. 609.

Astronomye, astronomy (including astrology), P. 414.

Asur, azure, N. 42.

At ye, with the eye, plainly (Fr. *à l'œil*), K. 2158.
Atrede, outwit, K. 1591.
Atrenne, outrun, K. 1591.
Atte, at the; *atte beste*, in the best manner, P. 29; *atte fulle*, fully, entirely, P. 651; *atte leste weye*, at least, K. 263.
Attempre, temperate, moderate, N. 18.
Atteyne, to attain, K. 385.
Auctoritee, authority (of a book), K. 2142.
Auctours, authors, N. 164.
Auditour, auditor of accounts, P. 594.
Auter, altar, K. 1047.
Avaunce, be of advantage, P. 246.
Avaunt, vaunt, boast, P. 227.
Avauntage, advantage, K. 435.
Avauntour, boaster, N. 97.
Aventure, adventure, accident, chance, fortune, P. 25, K. 216, 648.
Avisioun, vision, dream, N. 294.
Avow, vow, promise, K. 1379.
Avoy, fie! shame! N. 88.
Avys, consideration, P. 786; opinion, K. 1010.
Awayt, await, under watch, N. 405.
Axe, ask, K. 489.
Axyng, *swore his*, vowed (to fulfil) his demand, K. 968.
Ayel, grandfather, K. 1619.
Ayeyns, against, K. 929.

Baar, see *bere*.
Bacheler, bachelor, also an aspirant to knighthood, P. 80.
Bake, pp., baked, P. 343.
Balled, bald, P. 198, K. 1660.
Bane, destruction, K. 239, 823.
Barbour, barber, barber-surgeon, K. 1167.
Baren, see *bere*.
Bareyn(e), barren, K. 1119; destitute, K. 386.
Baronage, assembly of barons, nobility, K. 2238.
Barres, ornaments, or studs, of a girdle, P. 329.
Batailled, embattled, furnished with battlements, serrated, N. 40.
Bauderie, pimping, pandering to prostitution, K. 1068.
Bawdrik, baldrick, a cross belt, K. 116.
Beautee, beauty, K. 256.
Bedes, beads; *peire of b.*, set of beads, rosary, P. 159.
Be, *ben*, *been*, be; pr. pl. *been*, *are*, K. 76, *ben*, K. 85; imper. *beth ware*, beware, N. 510; pp. *be*, P. 56, *been*, P. 64.
Beer, see *bere*.
Beest, beast, N. 79; *best*, K. 1118; pl. *bestes*, K. 2071.
Beggestere, a beggar woman, P. 242.
Belle, *the*, the Bell (from its sign), an inn, P. 719.
Bemes, trumpets, horns, N. 578.
Benedicite, a mild exclamation, Lat. bless us, K. 927; frequently pronounced, *ben'dic'te*, K. 1257, N. 573. (See Kittredge, *Obs. on Troïlus*, p. 381.)
Bente, slope, hillside, K. 1123.
Benygne, kindly, P. 518.
Berd, beard, P. 270, 332; K. 1272, 2025.
Bere, to bear, carry, thrust, K. 1398; pt. *baar*, bore, P. 105; *bar hym lowe*, conducted himself humbly or quietly, K. 511; *beer*, N. 516; pl. *baren us*, acted, conducted ourselves, P. 721; pp. *bore*, K. 684; *born*, carried, K. 1788.
Bere, a bier, K. 2013.
Bere, a bear, K. 782, (gen. s.) K. 1284.
Berkyng, barking, N. 567.
Berwik, Berwick-on-Tweed, P. 692; from *B. unto Ware* (in Hertfordshire), means from end to end of England.
Berye, berry, P. 207.
Bestes, see *beest*.
Bet, adv., better, P. 242.
Bete, to kindle, light; literally, to mend, K. 1395, 1434.
Beth, see *be*.
Bibledde, pp., stained with blood, K. 1144.
Bifalle, to befall, K. 947; pp. *befallen*; pt. *bifel*, (it) befell, P. 19.
Biforn, *biforen*, adv., in front, P. 590, K. 518; ahead (in dealing), P. 572; prep., K. 1189.
Bigan, P. 827; has only the force of "did." (See *gan*.) So K. 1573.
Bihote, vb., promise, K. 996.
Biknewe, pt., acknowledged, N. 241.
Biknowe, acknowledge, K. 698.

Bile, bill (of a bird), N. 41.
Biquethe, bequeath, K. 1910.
Biraft, bereft, taken away, K. 503.
Biseken, beseech, K. 60.
Bisette, pt. s., employed, ordered, P. 279; pp. *biset*, fixed, arranged, K. 2154.
Biside (in), the neighborhood of, P. 445, 620.
Bisides, beside; *hym bisides*, in comparison with him (there was no such captain), P. 402.
Bisynesse, care, P. 520; diligence, K. 149; anxiety or solicitude (in love-making), K. 1070.
Bit, bids, P. 187.
Bithoght; I am b., have bethought me, P. 767.
Bitwixe, between, from between, K. 322.
Biwreye, bewray, make known, K. 1371; *biwreyest*, revealest, N. 231.
Blankmanger, a fricassee of capon in white sauce, P. 387.
Bledde, pt. s., bled, P. 145.
Bleynte, blenched, flinched, started back, K. 220.
Blyve, quickly, K. 1839.
Bocher, butcher, K. 1167.
Bokeler, buckler, P. 112, 471.
Bokelynge, buckling, K. 1645.
Boket, bucket, K. 675.
Boles, bulls, K. 1281.
Bond, pt. s., bound, K. 2133.
Bone, prayer (boon), K. 1411.
Boon, bone, K. 319.
Borax, borax (a cosmetic), P. 630.
Bord, table, P. 52, N. 23.
Bore, see *bere*.
Born hym wel, conducted himself well, P. 87.
Borowe, *to*, as a pledge, security, K. 764.
Bote, remedy, P. 424.
Boteler, butler, N. 314.
Botme, bottom, N. 281.
Bouk, body, trunk, K. 1888.
Bour, inner room, lady's bower, N. 12.
Bowes, boughs, K. 2059.
Box, boxwood, N. 578.
Bracer, an archer's arm-guard of stiff leather, P. 111.
Brak, see *breke*.
Bras, brass, N. 578.
Brast, burst, broke, N. 398; see *bresten*.
Braun, *brawnes*, brawn, muscle, P. 546; pl., K. 1277.
Brede, breadth, K. 1112.
Breed, bread, P. 147, 341.
Breem, bream, a river fish, P. 350.
Breke, to break, P. 551; pt. s. *brak*, K. 610.
Breme, fiercely, K. 841.
Bren, bran, N. 420.
Brend, burnished, K. 1304.
Brenne, burn, K. 1473; pt. s. *brente*, K. 2088; pp. *brent*, burnt, K. 1159.
Brennyng(e), burning, K. 138, 1142.
Brest, see *bresten*.
Brest, breast, P. 115.
Bresten, burst, K. 1122; pr. s. *brest*, K. 1752; pt. s. *brast*, N. 398.
Bretful, brimful, P. 687; thickly set, K. 1306.
Bretherhed, a religious brotherhood, P. 511.
Briddes, birds, N. 61, K. 2071.
Brimstoon, brimstone, sulphur (as cosmetic), P. 629.
Britayne, Brittany, P. 409.
Brondes, gen. s., fire-brand's, K. 1481.
Brood, broad, P. 155, 471.
Brother, gen. s., brother's, K. 2226.
Brouke, use, enjoy, N. 480.
Browdyng, embroidery, K. 1640.
Browes, eyebrows, P. 627, K. 1276.
Broyded, braided, K. 191.
Bulte, bolt (of grist), N. 420.
Bulte, built, K. 690.
Burdeux, Bordeaux, the great wine port, P. 397.
Burdoun, bass accompaniment, P. 673.
Burgeys, burgess, citizen, P. 369.
Burned, burnished, K. 1125; cf. *brend*.
But, unless, P. 582, 782; K. 262, 1387.
But if, unless, P. 351, 656.
But that, except that, saving that, K. 2144.
By and by, one by the other, K. 153.
Byjaped, pp., tricked, befooled, K. 727.
Bynne, bin, chest, P. 593.
By ordre, in (due) order, K. 1076.
By the morwe, on the morrow, mornings, P. 334.
By tyme, betimes, punctually, K. 1717.
Bytynge, biting, piercing, K. 1688.
By weste, to or in the west, P. 388.

Caas, see *cas*.
Caitif, adj., wretched, K. 694; pl. *caytyves*, poor wretches, K. 66, 859.
Cam, see *come*.
Can, knows, P. 210; *can no divisioun*, recognizes no distinction, K. 922; *can hem . . . thank*, feels gratitude to them, K. 950, 2206; pl. *conne*, can, N. 501; pt. s. *coude*, knew, P. 327, 467; knew how, P. 713 (the verb is used also in the modern sense).
Cantel, corner, K. 2150.
Care, sorrow, K. 463.
Careful, sorrowful, K. 707.
Careyne, carrion, carcase, K. 1155.
Carf, carved, P. 100.
Carl, churl, P. 545.
Caroles, figure dances accompanied with singing, K. 1073.
Carpe, talk, bandy words, P. 474.
Carte, chariot, K. 1164; cart, N. 198.
Cas, case, hap, P. 585, K. 1499; pl. *caas* (of law), P. 323.
Cas, case (for arrows), quiver, K. 1500.
Caste, estimate, set, K. 1314; pt., planned, K. 1996; N. 255.
Castes, devices, plots, K. 1610.
Casuelly, by chance, N. 281.
Catapuce, the herb spurge, N. 145.
Catel, property of any kind, capital, chattels, P. 373, 540, N. 7.
Caughte, took, P. 498.
Caytyves, see *caitif*.
Celle, a branch of a monastery, or religious house, P. 172; cell (division of the brain), K. 518.
Centaure, the herb centaury, N. 143.
Cerial, the holme oak, *quercus cerrus*, K. 1432.
Ceruce, white lead (as cosmetic), P. 630.
Ceynt, cincture, girdle, P. 329.
Champartye, partnership in power, K. 1091.
Chaped, capped, tipped (of the end of a sheath), P. 366.
Chapeleyne, chaplain, P. 164.
Chapman, merchant, P. 397.
Char, car, chariot, K. 1280.
Charge, care; *yevest litel charge*, givest little thought to, K. 426; *were no charge*, were no matter, K. 1429; *in his charge*, part of his undertaking, P. 733.
Charitable, loving, kind, P. 143.
Charitee, kindly feeling, P. 452, K. 765.
Chasteyn, a chestnut-tree, K. 2064.
Chaunterie, chantry, 'an endowment for the payment of a priest to sing mass agreeably to the appointment of the founder' (Skeat), and usually for the repose of his soul. There were thirty-five such foundations at St. Paul's, served by fifty-four priests. Naturally the positions were sinecures. Such services were frequently sung in chapels, 'chantries' of great beauty, built only large enough for the officiating priests.
Chees, from *chesen*, imper., choose, K. 737, 756.
Chere, appearance, manner, P. 139, 728; comfort, delight, K. 1825.
Cherles, churls', K. 1601.
Chevetayn, chieftain, K. 1697.
Chevisaunce, borrowing transactions, P. 282.
Cheyne, a chain, K. 2130.
Chiknes, chickens, P. 380.
Chirche, church (for funeral), K. 1902.
Chirkyng, 'a jumble of harsh, shrill cries' (Corson), K. 1146.
Chivachie, cavalry expeditions, P. 85.
Chuk, n., a cluck, N. 354.
Cipioun, Scipio Africanus, the younger, N. 304.
Circes, Circe, K. 1086.
Citee, city, K. 81.
Citheroun, Mount Cithæron, usually regarded as the dwelling of Apollo and the Muses, but in Chaucer, following *Le Roman de la Rose* and Boccaccio, sacred to Venus, K. 1078, 1365.
Citole, a stringed instrument, K. 1101, resembling a psaltery. (See *sautrye*.)
Clarree, 'wine mixed with honey and spices, and afterwards strained till it was clear' (Skeat), K. 613.
Clateren, clatter, K. 1501; pt. pl. *clatereden*, K. 1565.
Clemence, clemency (personified), K. 70.
Clennesse, cleanness (of life), P. 506.
Clense, to cleanse, P. 631.
Cleped, called, P. 121; K. 930.
Clepen, to call, P. 643; K. 1372; pa. ind. pl., P. 620.

Clerk, a man of learning, scholar, student (nearly all such during the Middle Ages were in orders), P. 285, 480; gen. s. *clerkes*, K. 305; pl. *clerkis*, N. 415.

Cloisterer, cloistered monk, P. 259.

Cloistre, cloister, monastery, P. 181.

Cloke, a cloak, P. 157.

Clomben, ascended, risen, N. 378.

Cloos, adj., closed, shut, N. 512.

Clos, an enclosure, yard, N. 540. (We say to-day a cathedral *close*.)

Clothered, clotted, K. 1887.

Cofre, coffer, chest, P. 298.

Cok, cock, P. 823.

Col-blak, coal-black, K. 1284.

Cole, coal, K. 1834.

Colere, choler, N. 126.

Colered of, collared with (an heraldic term), K. 1294.

Colerik, choleric, irascible, P. 587, N. 135.

Colfox, a black-tipped fox, N. 395 (cf. his description, N. 82ff.).

Colpons, locks (of hair), P. 679; logs, K. 2009. Literally something cut off, separated.

Cometh, imper. pl. of *come*, P. 839.

Commune, in, in common, generally, K. 393.

Communes, commoners, common people, K. 1651.

Compaignable, companionable, sociable, N. 52.

Compaignye, company, P. 24.

Compleynt, armed, armed insurrection, K. 1154. (Chaucer had undoubtedly witnessed the uprising of the commons in 1381, under John Ball and Jack Straw; see N. 574.)

Composicioun, agreement, P. 848, K. 1793.

Condicioun, condition, quality, character, P. 38. K. 573.

Compassyng, contriving, scheming, K. 1138.

Compeer, gossip, crony, P. 670.

Complecciouη, physical temperament, N. 104; *complexioun*, bodily habit, P. 333.

Confort, comfort, pleasure, P. 773, 776.

Conforteth, comforteth, K. 1858.

Conne, see *can*.

Conscience, sensitiveness, sympathy, P. 150.

Conserve, preserve, K. 1471.

Constellacioun, constellation, an astrological conjunction of stars (hence its effect, destiny), K. 230.

Contek, strife, contention, N. 112, K. 1145.

Contenaunce, countenance, general appearance, K. 1058.

Contrarie, opponent, adversary, K. 1001, N. 460.

Contree, country, region, P. 216, K. 355.

Conveyed, accompanied, escorted, K. 1879.

Cop, top, P. 554.

Cope, a semi-circular, ecclesiastical cloak, P. 260.

Coppe, cup, P. 134.

Corage, heart, intention, spirit, P. 11, 22, K. 1087.

Coroune, crown, K. 1432.

Correccioun, pleyn, exemplary punishment, K. 1603.

Corrumpable, corruptible, K. 2152.

Corven, pp., cut, K. 1838.

Cosyn, cousin, K. 273; closely related, P. 742.

Cote, coat, P. 103, 612.

Cote-armure, a coat bearing the wearer's arms, worn over the body-armor, K. 158, 1282.

Couched, thickly embroidered, K. 1303; laid, K. 2075.

Coude, see *can*.

Coude he knowe, knew how to recognize, P. 382; or possibly *coude* is a mere auxiliary in the sense of 'did'.

Counseil, counsel, opinion, K. 283; adviser, confidant, K. 289.

Countour, auditor of accounts, P. 359.

Countrefete, imitate, P. 139.

Countrepleted, argued with, I. xxvi.

Courtepy, a short cloak of coarse stuff, P. 290.

Couthe, known, renowned, P. 14.

Coverchiefs, kerchiefs, P. 453.

Covered, spread (with food, etc.), P. 354.

Covyne, deceit, petty conspiracy, P. 694.

Cowardye, cowardice, K. 1872.

Coy, quiet, modest, P. 119.

Cracchyng, scratching, K. 1976.

Craft, trade, calling, P. 692.
Crafty, skilful, clever, K. 1039.
Crispe, crisp, curly, K. 1307.
Cronycle, chronicle, N. 388.
Croppe, top (of a tree), K. 674; pl., top buds, shoots, P. 7.
Croys, cross, P. 699.
Crulle, curly, P. 81.
Cryke, creek, inlet, P. 409.
Cure, care, pains, P. 303, K. 149, 1995.
Curious, skilful, P. 577.
Curs, curse, the lesser excommunication, P. 655.
Cursen, to curse (ecclesiastically), excommunicate, P. 486.
Cut, lot, P. 835. (We still 'draw cuts.')

Daliaunce, pleasant chat, gossip, P. 211.
Damoysele, damsel (a less dignified title than *madame*), N. 50.
Dampned, condemned, K. 317.
Daun, a common title (Latin *Dominus*), K. 521, N. 492.
Dar, pr. 1 s., dare, K. 293; 2 s. *darst*, K. 282; pt. subj. *dorste*, P. 454.
Darreyne, contest, decide by combat, K. 751.
Daunce, the olde, the old game, old tricks, P. 476.
Daunger, jurisdiction, control, P. 663.
Daungerous, domineering, stiff in manner, P. 517.
Dawenynge, dawning, N. 62.
Daweth, dawns, K. 818.
Dayerye, dairy, P. 597.
Dayesye, daisy, P. 332.
Debonaire, gracious, K. 1424.
Dede, deed, P. 742.
Deduyt, pleasure, K. 1319.
Deed, dead, P. 145.
Deedly, deathlike, K. 55, 224.
Deef, deaf, P. 446.
Deel, del, part, bit, K. 967, N. 14; *every del*, completely, K. 1233; *a ful greet del*, for the most part (a very great deal), especially, P. 415.
Degree, rank, station in life, P. 40, 744, K. 310; *in his d.*, of its kind, K. 1998, 2030.
Degree, a step, row of seats, K. 1033, 1721.
Delen with, deal with, have to do with, P. 247.
Deliver, active, nimble, P. 84.
Deliverly, adroitly, N. 596.
Delve, to dig, P. 536.
Delyt, delight, pleasure, P. 335, K. 821.
Deme, deem, K. 1023.
Departe, to part, separate, K. 276.
Departyng, parting, K. 1916.
Depeynted, painted, depicted, K. 1169, 1173.
Dere, injure, K. 964.
Derke, dark, K. 1137.
Derre, dearer, K. 590.
Dertemouthe, Dartmouth, P. 389.
Desdayn, disdain, P. 789.
Desiryngе, n., desire, K. 1064.
Despit, spite, malicious anger, K. 83.
Despitous, pitiless, cruel, P. 516, K. 738.
Desport, gaiety, P. 137.
Destreyneth, constrains, oppresses, K. 597.
Dette, debt, P. 280.
Dettelees, debtless, P. 582.
Devoir, duty (particularly of a knight), K. 1740.
Devys, planning, direction, P. 816.
Devyse, tell, P. 34; *for to d.*, to tell (of it), K. 190; devise, contrive, K. 396; describe, N. 218; set (as task), K. 567.
Deye, dairywoman, N. 23.
Deyned, deigned; impers. with dat. object, N. 361.
Deyntee, adj., dainty, N. 15; blooded, P. 168.
Deyntees, dainties, P. 346.
Deys, dais, P. 370, K. 1342.
Diapred, having a diaper (lozenge) pattern, variegated, K. 1300.
Dich, ditch, N. 28.
Diched, ditched, moated, K. 1030.
Dight, dressed, arrayed, K. 183; prepared, K. 772.
Digne, worthy, P. 141, K. 1358; haughty, excessively dignified, P. 517.
Dischevele, dishevelled, P. 683.
Disconfiture, defeat, K. 1863.
Disconfityngе, discomfiture, K. 1861.
Disconfort, discomfort, misery, K. 1152.
Disconforten, to distress, dishearten, K. 1846.
Disfigured, changed in aspect, K. 545.
Disherited, disinherited, K. 2068.

Disjoynt, disadvantage, dilemma, K. 2104.
Dispence, expenditure, P. 441, K. 1024.
Dispitously, cruelly, fiercely, K. 266.
Disport, diversion; *was of greet d.*, was affable, readily amused, P. 137; sport, amusement, P. 775.
Disposicioun, astrological position, K. 229; disposal, guidance, K. 1506.
Disputisoun, disputation, N. 418.
Disteyne, bedim, outshine, I. xxv.
Distreyne, oppress, K. 958.
Divinistre, diviner, K. 1953.
Divisioun, distinction, K. 992.
Divynynge, guessing, predicting, K. 1663.
Doghtren, daughters, N. 9.
Dokes, ducks, N. 570.
Do, *doon*, to cause (the inf. object often has passive force, Fr. *faire faire*), *hath . . . doon make*, has caused (to be) made, K. 1047; *do . . . aresten*, cause to be stopped, N. 200; *doon wroght*, caused (to be) wrought, K. 1055; *doth . . . to reste*, causeth . . . to rest, 1763.
Dokked, docked, cut short, P. 590.
Dong, dung, P. 530.
Donge, to dung, manure, N. 216.
Doomes, legal decisions, judgment, P. 323.
Dormant, *table*, a fixed or permanent table, P. 353 (Tables were commonly set on trestles and cleared away after the meal. At the Franklin's it was always meal-time.)
Dorste, see *dar*.
Drecched, troubled, distressed, N. 67.
Drede, dread, fear (personified), K. 1140.
Drede, to fear (with reflexive obj. *hym*), P. 660; *hit is no d.*, there is no fear, I. xxxiv.
Dredful, cautious, timid, K. 621.
Drenchyng, drowning, K. 1598.
Dresse, to set in order, prepare, P. 106, K. 1736.
Dreye, dry, K. 2166.
Dreynt, drowned, N. 262.
Dronke . . . as a Mous, dead drunk, 403. (The entire expression is, *dronke as a dreynt* (drowned) *mous*, Ritson, *Ancient Songs*, i. 70.) Skeat.
Dronken, pt. pl., drank, P. 820; pp., drunk, P. 135, 637.
Drouped, drooped, P. 107.
Drugge, drudge, K. 558.
Duk, duke, K. 2. (Mediæval titles were freely applied to heroes of antiquity, — Duke Jason, Sir Orpheus, etc., cf. Ger. *Frau Venus*.)
Dure, endure, last, K. 1912; stay, remain, K. 378.
Dusked, pt. pl., grew dim, K. 1948.
Dwelle, stay, remain, K. 803; *dwelled*, lingered, K. 1946.
Dyen, to die, K. 251.
Dyere, dyer, P. 362.
Dyke, to ditch, P. 536.
Dys, dice, K. 380.

Ecclesiaste, ecclesiastic, P. 708.
Ech after other, each after the other, K. 41; *e. other*, each the other, K. 1767.
Echon, *echoon*, each one, P. 820.
Eek, eke, also, besides, P. 5, 41, K. 13, 31.
Eet, ate, K. 1190; *ete*, imp., eat, N. 147.
th'Effect, *But al*, but (to) the general facts, K. 1349; substance, K. 1401; matter, K. 1624.
Eft, again, K. 811.
Elde, old age, K. 1590.
Elles, else, P. 375.
Embrouded, embroidered, P. 89.
Emforth, according to, to the extent of, K. 1377.
Empoysonyng, poisoning, K. 1602.
Emprise, enterprise, undertaking, K. 1682.
Encens, incense, K. 1571.
Encombred, encumbered, P. 508; wearied, disgusted, K. 860.
Encrees, increase, P. 275, K. 1326.
Endelong, lengthways, from end to end, K. 1133, 1820.
Endite, write, compose, P. 95, K. 522.
Engendred, engendered, K. 2139; produced, P. 4.
Engyned, tortured (an *engyn* was an instrument of any sort; in this case, of torture), N. 240.
Enhauncen, to raise, K. 576.
Enhorte, to encourage, K. 1993.
Enoynt, anointed, K. 2103.

Ensample, example, P. 496.
Entente, intent, purpose, K. 142.
Entree, entrance, K. 1125.
Entuned in hir nose, intoned with nasal resonance, P. 123 (a good quality of the singing voice, so that Chaucer may not be making fun of the Prioress' singing 'through her nose').
Envyned, stored with wine, P. 342.
Er, ere, before, P. 36, 835, K. 182, 297; *a lite er*, a little before, N. 293.
Ere, to plow, K. 28.
Eres, ears, P. 556, K. 664.
Erly, early, P. 33, 809.
Erst, first, P. 776; *erst than*, earlier than, before, K. 708.
Eschaunge, exchange, P. 278.
Eschue, to eschew, avoid, K. 2185.
Ese, pleasure, entertainment, P. 768.
Esed, entertained, accommodated, P. 29.
Esen, to entertain, K. 1336.
Esily, easily, P. 469.
Espye, to see, discover; *gan e.*, did espy, K. 254; *coude . . . aspye*, knew how to discover, K. 562.
Estat, state, condition, P. 203, 522.
Estatlich, stately, P. 140.
Estatly, dignified, impressive, P. 281.
Estres, the ins and outs of a building, interior, K. 1113.
Esy, easy, P. 223; moderate, P. 441.
Eterne, eternal, K. 251, 1132; adv., eternally, K. 2157.
Evele; me list ful e. pleye, I am very ill inclined to jest, K. 269.
Even, just, K. 1006; *evene lengthe*, good stature, P. 83.
Evene, bere hym, conduct himself consistently, circumspectly, K. 665.
Everich, every, P. 241; each, P. 371, K. 790, 1269.
Everich a, every single, P. 733.
Everichon, every one, P. 31, 747.
Ew, a yew-tree, K. 2065.
Expouned, pt., expounded, N. 295.
Ey, egg, N. 25.
Eyen, eyes, P. 152, 267, K. 664.
Eyleth, ails, K. 223.

Fader, father, P. 100; gen. sing. *fader*, P. 781.
Fader kyn, for youre, for your ancestors' sake, N. 148.
Fadme, fathoms, K. 2058.
Fair langage, agreeable talk, P. 211.
Fairnesse, fairness, beauty (of life), P. 519.
Faldyng, a coarse frieze cloth, P. 391.
Falle, befall, P. 585; pp. *falle*, happened, P. 324, K. 1845; pt. *fil*, fell, came by chance, P. 845, K. 176; *fille*, pt. subj., should fall, K. 1252.
Falwe, fallow, pale yellow, K. 506.
Famulier, familiar, at home, P. 215.
Fare, hote, angry doings (hot-headed), K. 951.
Fare, faren, to go, fare, K. 537; pr. pl., K. 403; pp. *fare*, gone, K. 1578; *faren in londe*, gone away, N. 59.
Farsed, stuffed, P. 233.
Faste by, hard by, near at hand, P. 719, K. 618, 830; *faste . . . besyde*, close beside, K. 620.
Faught, pr. s., fought, P. 399.
Fayn, glad, fain, P. 766; *wolde out of his prisoun fayn*, would gladly (be) out, etc., K. 399.
Fees, rewards, K. 945.
Feeldes (heraldic), the fields, or grounds, of banners, K. 119.
Feend, devil, fiend, N. 466, pl. *feendes*, N. 569.
Fel, felle, fell, cruel, K. 701, 1772.
Felawe, fellow, P. 650, K. 766.
Felawshipe, fellowship, P. 32, K. 768.
Feld, felled, cut down, K. 2066.
Femenye, the country of the Amazons (apparently a word of Chaucer's coining from Lat. *femina*), K. 8, 19.
Fer, far, P 388, 491; comp. *fer ne ner*, neither farther nor nearer, more nor less, K. 992; *ferre*, further, P. 48; *ferrer*, P. 835; superl. *ferreste*, farthest, P. 494.
Ferden, pt. p., fared, K. 514; acted, K. 789.
Fer forthly, far forth, to such an extent, K. 102.
Fermacies, pharmacies, medicines, K. 1855.
Ferne, distant, P. 14.
Ferre, ferrer, ferreste, see *fer*.
Ferthyng, small (lit. *fourth*) portion, bit, P. 134; farthing, P. 255.
Festeth, feasts (in a general sense) entertains, K. 1335.

Festne, to fasten, P. 195.
Fet, fetched, brought, P. 819, K. 1669.
Fetisly, neatly, properly, P. 124.
Fettres, fetters, K. 421.
Fetys, neatly made, P. 157.
Fey, faith, K. 268.
Feyne, to feign, P. 736; pp., 705.
Fiers, fierce, K. 740, 1087.
Fil, see *fallen*.
Fillen, pr. pl., fell, K. 91.
Finistere, Cape Finisterre, N. W. Spain, P. 408.
Fir, fire, K. 2084, N. 110.
Fir-reed, fire-red, P. 624.
Firy, fiery, K. 706.
Fithele, fiddle, P. 296.
Flatour, flatterer, N. 505.
Flaundrish, Flemish, P. 272.
Flee, vb., fly, N. 122.
Fleigh, flew, N. 411, 519, 597.
Flete, float, K. 1539.
Fletyng, floating, K. 1098.
Flex, flax, P. 676.
Fley, flew, N. 352.
Flikerynge, fluttering, K. 1104.
Flotery, disordered (*con rabbuffata barba, Tes.* xi. 30), K. 2025. (Literally, waving.)
Flour, flower, P. 4, K. 124.
Flowen, pt. p., flew, N. 571.
Floytyng, whistling, P. 91.
Folwed, followed, P. 528.
Folwynge, following, K. 1509.
Fomy, foamy (from chafing their bits), K. 1648.
Fond, pt. s., found, P. 701; provided for, N. 9.
Foom, foam, K. 801.
For, because, P. 443; in order that, K. 2021; against, *for any thyng*, against all things (perils), P. 276 (but the sense of the phrase is not wholly clear), N. 297; in spite of, K. 1887; *f. al.*, 1162.
For that, because that, K. 1210, N. 494.
For to, with the inf. denotes purpose, as in P. 17, K. 127; but is frequently used merely as the sign of the inf., P. 13, K. 56.
For-blak, very black, K. 1286.
Fordo; pp. *fordone*, destroyed, K. 702.
Forgeten, *foryeten*, forgotten, K. 1163, 2196.
Forheed, forehead, P. 154.
Forn-cast, pp., forecast, preordained, N. 397.
Forneys, furnace, P. 202, 559.
For-old, very old, K. 1284.
For-pyned, greatly tortured, P. 205.
Fors, force, K. 1865; *do no f. of*, take no account of, N. 121.
For-slewthen, lose by sloth, N. 276.
Forster, forester, P. 117.
Forther-moor, further on, K. 1211.
Forthren, to further, aid, K. 279.
Fortunen, to predict, foresee (a fortunate 'ascendant'), P. 417; *fortunest*, allottest fortune (good or bad), K. 1519.
Forward, agreement, promise, P. 33, K. 1761.
Forwityng, foreknowledge, N. 423.
Forwot, foreknows, N. 414.
Foryete, forget, K. 1024.
Foryeve, forgive, P. 743, K. 960.
Fother, load, lot, P. 530, K. 1050.
Foundred, stumbled (cf. foundered, of a horse), K. 1829.
Fowel, fowl, bird, P. 190, K. 1579; pl. *fowles*, P. 9.
Foyne, p. subj., K. 1692; thrust, K. 2550; *foyneth*, p. indic., K. 1757; pr. pl. *foynen*, K. 796.
Fraknes, freckles, K. 1311.
Frankeleyn, franklin, freeholder, country gentleman, P. 331; pl., P. 216.
Fredom, freedom, liberality, frankness of manner, P. 46.
Free, frank and generous, N. 94. (The word covered to an Englishman of the Middle Ages all the lovable, social qualities. It was a lover's best word for his lady. Chaucer calls his queen 'my Lady free,' *Legende of Good Women.*)
Frendlich, friendly, K. 1822.
Frere, friar, a brother of a religious order, P. 208.
Freten, inf., devour, K. 1161.
Fulfild, filled full, K. 82.
Fume, vapors arising from excess in eating or drinking, N. 104.
Fumetere, the herb fumitory, N. 143.
Funeral, adj., funereal, K. 2006, 2054.
Fyled, filed, smoothed, K. 1294.
Fynde, find, invent, P. 736; *fynden*, pr.

pl., find, discover, K. 769; provide, K. 1555.

Gabbe, jest, lie, N. 246.

Gadered, pp., gathered, K. 1325; pt. s. *gaderede*, P. 824.

Galyngale, sweet cyperus root, P. 381.

Game, sport, K. 948; *in my g.*, in jest, N. 442.

Gamed, impers., it pleased, P. 534.

Gan, used as an auxiliary with about the force of *did; gan appere*, did appear, K. 1488; *gan espye*, did see, K. 254; *gan to holde*, held, K. 648; *gan . . . fynde*, found, K. 1594; pt. pl. *gonne*, K. 800.

Gapyng upright, gaping upwards, K. 1150.

Gappe, gap (of a hedge or thicket), K. 781.

Gargat, throat, N. 515.

Garleek, garlic, P. 634.

Gastly, ghastly, K. 1126.

Gat, got, P. 703.

Gat-tothed, goat-toothed, lascivious, P. 468.

Gaude grene, light green, K. 1221.

Gauded al with grene, having the large beads, gaudies, of the rosary, of green. These, usually 15, stood for *pater nosters*, the small beads, 150, for *Ave Marias*, P. 159.

Gaunt, Ghent, in East Flanders, P. 448.

Gayler, jailer, K. 206.

Gayneth, impers., avails, K. 318, 1897.

Gaytres beryis, dogwood berries, N. 145.

Gentil, noble, wellborn and bred, P. 72, K. 1939; genteel, P. 718.

Gentilesse, *of hir*, graciously, N. 476.

Gere, gear, trappings, P. 352; K. 1322; manner, ways, K. 514; pl. *geres*, K. 673.

Gerful, changeable, K. 680.

Gerland, garland, P. 666, K. 196; pl. *gerlandes*, K. 2079.

Gerner, garner, P. 593.

Gery, changeable, K. 678.

Gesse, to suppose, guess, P. 82; *for to g.*, as you would suppose, K. 1735; to think, P. 117.

Geten, got, P. 291.

Giggynge, fitting with straps, or handles, K. 1646.

Gilte, golden, L. xxv.

Giltelees, guiltless, K. 454.

Gipoun, a short coat, *juste-au-corps*, worn under the armor, P. 75, K. 1262.

Gipser, a pouch or purse, P. 357.

Gladen, gladden, console, K. 1979.

Gladere, one who makes glad, K. 1365.

Glarynge, staring, P. 684.

Glede, live coal, K. 1139.

Gloweden, pt. pl., glowed, K. 1274.

Go, *gon*, *goon*, to go, walk, P. 450; *goth*, goes, K. 213; pl. *goon*, P. 771, N. 32; imper. *goth*, K. 1702.

Gobet, a small piece, bit, gobbet, P. 696.

Godhede, godhead, divinity, K. 1523.

Goliardeys, a ribald jester, buffoon, P. 560.

Gon sithen, ago; literally, passed since (then), K. 663.

Gonne, see *gan*.

Good, property, goods, P. 581, 611.

Goost, *gost*, ghost, spirit, P. 205, K. 1910.

Goot, goat, P. 688.

Gootland, Gottland, an island in the Baltic, P. 408.

Goune, gown, P. 93.

Governaunce, management of business, P. 281; control, reasonable purpose and execution, K. 455.

Governyng, control, P. 599.

Grace, favor (or perhaps, pardon), K. 387.

Graunt mercy, Fr., many thanks, grammercy, N. 150.

Grauntyng, granting (of both prayers, Palamon's and Arcite's), K. 1581.

Grece, grease, P. 135.

Gree, the prize, superiority, K. 1875.

Greet, great, P. 84, K. 218; comp. *gretter*, K. 5; supl. *the gretteste*, N. 164.

Grene, n., green boughs (as a lover's Mayday favor), K. 654.

Greves, groves, K. 637, 783; branches, K. 649.

Greveth, grieves, K. 59.

Griffoun, a griffin hawk, one caught and tamed, hence fiercer than those bred in captivity, K. 1275 (see note).

Grisly, horrible, dreadful, K. 505.

Gronen; gan g. in his throte, snored uneasily, moaned, N. 66.

Grope, to test, probe, P. 644.

Grote, groat (small coin), N. 138.
Groymyng, murmuring, mutterings of revolt, K. 1602.
Grucchen, grudge, murmur, K. 2200; *gruccheth*, grudges, K. 2187.
Gruf, flat on the face, grovelling, K. 91.
Grym, grim, fierce, K. 1661.
Grys, gray fur, P. 194.
Gye, to guide, K. 1957.
Gyle, guile, deceit, K. 1738.
Gynglen, to jingle, P. 170.
Gyse, guise, fashion, K. 135; *at his owne g.*, after his own way, P. 663.

Haberdassher, a seller of hats, P. 361.
Habergeoun, a coat of mail, P. 76, K. 1261.
Hakke, to hack, K. 2007.
Halwes, saints (cf. all hallowe'en), by metonomy, shrines, P. 14.
Hamer, hammer, K. 1650.
Han, see *have*.
Hardily, boldly; used absolutely, 'to speak boldly' (Corson), P. 156.
Hardynesse, boldness, K. 1090.
Haried forth, dragged out roughly, K. 1868.
Harlot, fellow, (possibly) ribald, P. 647.
Harlotryes, ribaldries, P. 561.
Harneised, equipped, P. 114.
Harneys, harness, armor, K. 148, 755.
Harre, hinge, P. 550.
Harrow, cry of distress, N. 225.
Hauberk, coat of mail, K. 1573.
Haunt, custom, practice, P. 447.
Have, *han*, have, K. 19; pr. pl. *han*, P. 795, 849; pt. *hadde* (with silent 'e' when auxiliary), P. 48, K. 55.
Heeld, see *holde*.
Heelp, helped, K. 793.
Heep, assembly, crowd, P. 575.
Heer, here, K. 933.
Heer, hair, P. 589, K. 1148; pl. *heres*, K. 1276, N. 84.
Heeth, heath, P. 6, 606.
Hegges, hedges, N. 398.
Heigh, high, K. 207; great, K. 940; prominent, K. 1309.
Heigh and lowe, *in*, in everything, completely, P. 817.
Hele, health, wellbeing, K. 413, N. 130.
Heled, healed, K. 1848.
Heled, hidden, concealed, N. 235.
Hem, them, P. 39, K. 89 (the form survives in colloquial '*em*).
Hem thoughte, it seemed to them, N. 568.
Hemself, themselves, K. 396.
Heng, see *honge*.
Henne, hence, K. 1498.
Hente, seize, get, P. 299, 698; pt. s., took, K. 99; pt. pl. *henten*, K. 46.
Heraud, herald, K. 159, 1675.
Herbergage, harborage, lodging, N. 169.
Herberwe, harbor, P. 403; lodging, inn, P. 765.
Herd, haired, K. 1660.
Herde, herdsman, shepherd, P. 603.
Here-agayns, against this, K. 2181.
Hereos, Eros, Cupid; *the loveres maladye of H.*, love-sickness, K. 516.
Herknen, harken, K. 668; *herkneth*, imp. pl., harken, listen, P. 788, K. 1816.
Hert, hart, K. 831.
Herte-blood, heart's blood (*herte* is gen. s.), K. 1148.
Hertely, heartily, cordially, P. 762.
Herte-spoon, midriff (?), breastbone (?), 1748.
Hest, behest, command, K. 1674.
Hete, to promise, K. 1540.
Hethenesse, heathendom, P. 49.
Heve of, heave off, P. 550.
Hewe, color, complexion, K. 180; *hewes*, colors, paints, K. 1230.
Hewed, hued, colored, N. 49.
Hider, hither, P. 672.
Hidous, hideous, K. 1120; *hidously*, hideously, K. 843.
Highte, was called, P. 616, K. 1114; pl., were called, K. 2062.
Highte, *on*, aloud, K. 926.
Hipes, hips, P. 472.
Hir, her, P. 119, K. 11.
Hir, their, P. 586, K. 320.
Hold, *in*, in keeping, custody, N. 54.
Holde(n), to hold, esteem, P. 141; pp. *holde*, held, K. 832; esteemed, K. 1861; beholden, K. 449.
Hole, *hool*, whole, P. 533, K. 2148.
Holm, evergreen oak, holm-oak, K. 2063.
Holpen, helped, P. 18.
Holt, wood, grove, P. 6.
Holwe, hollow, P. 289, K. 505.
Honest, fit, becoming, P. 246.

Honestly, discreetly, K. 586.
Honge, to hang, K. 1552; pt. *heng*, hung, P. 676; pt. pl. *henge*, P. 677.
Hooly, wholly, P. 599.
Hoom, home, P. 400, K. 1881.
Hoomly, homely, plainly dressed, P. 328.
Hoppesteres, female dancers (metaphor for ships, dancing on the waves, due to Chaucer's reading Boccaccio's *navi bellatrici*, 'war ships,' as *ballatrici*, 'dancing'), K. 1159.
Hors, pl., horses, P. 74, 598.
Hostiler, inn-keeper, P. 241.
Hote, hot, P. 394; adv., P. 97.
Houped, whooped, N. 580.
Houres, *in*, in astrological hours when the planets were favorably disposed for his patient, P. 416.
Housbondrie, economy, thrift, N. 8.
Humblesse, humility, K. 923.
Hunte, hunter, K. 820, 1160.
Huntyng, *on*, a-hunting, K. 829.
Hust, hushed, K. 2123.
Hye, to hasten, K. 1416.
Hye, *in*, in haste, K. 2121.
Hye, high, K. 39, 1605; adv., P. 271, K. 1217.
Hyer hond, upper hand, P. 399.
Hym, frequently used as a reflexive dative (cf. the Latin ethical dat.); *he rideth h. ful right*, K. 833.
Hym-selven, himself, P. 184.
Hym thoughte, it seemed to him, P. 682.
Hyndreste, hindermost, P. 622.
Hyne, hind, farm-servant, P. 603.

Ilke, same, P. 64, 175.
In, *inne*, inn, lodging, K. 1578, N. 206.
Infect, invalidated, P. 320.
Infortune, misfortune, K. 1163.
Inne, adv., in, P. 41; *ther I am i.*, wherein I am, K. 760.
Inned, lodged, entertained, K. 1334.
Inspired, quickened, breathed life into, P. 6.
Iren, iron, K. 218, 1134.
It am I, the old idiom for 'it is I,' K. 878, 602.

Janglere, prater, reckless talker, P. 560.
Jangleth, prates, gabbles, N. 615.
Japes, tricks, jests, P. 705, N. 271.
Japed, befooled, K. 871.
Jeet, jet, N. 41.
Jet, *of the newe*, in the latest fashion, P. 682.
Jolif, joyful, N. 254.
Jolitee, prettiness; *for j.*, P. 680, for the sake of a good appearance; jollity (ironical), pretty how d' ye do, K. 949.
Journee, a day's march, K. 1880.
Joynant, *evene*, just adjoining, K. 202.
Juge, a judge, P. 814, K. 854.
Jugement, judgment, P. 778.
Juste, *justen*, to joust, P. 96, K. 1628.
Justes, jousts, tournament, K. 1862.
Juwise, judgment, condemnation, K. 881.

Keep, heed, care; *taken k.*, guard against it, K. 1830; *took he no k.*, paid no heed, disregarded, P. 398; *take k.*, consider (it well), P. 503; *as he took k.*, as he noticed, K. 531.
Kembd, combed, K. 1285.
Kempe, shaggy, K. 1276.
Kepe, to care, take care, P. 130, K. 1380, 2102; pp. *kept*, held, guarded, P. 276; pt. s. *kepte*, P. 415.
Kerver, carver, sculptor, K. 1041.
Kervyng, cutting, sculpture, K. 1057.
Knarre, stocky, thick-set man, P. 549.
Knarry, gnarled, K. 1119.
Knaves, boys, servants, K. 1870.
Knobbes, large pimples, or perhaps, wens, P. 633.
Knowe, pp., known, K. 345, 1442.
Kyn, kine, cows, N. 11.
Kyn, race, lineage, N. 148; see *fader*
Kynde, nature, K. 1593, N. 376.
Kynrede, kindred, K. 428.

Laas, lace, sling, P. 392; *las*, snare, K. 959, 1093.
Lacerte, a fleshy muscle, K. 1895.
Lacynge, lacing, fastening, K. 1646.
Lad, pp., led, K. 1762; pt. *ladde*, K. 588.
Lady, gen., lady's, P. 695.
Lafte, pt., left, failed, P. 492.
Lak, lack, N. 24.
Lakked, impers., was lacking, K. 1422; *lakkede*, P. 756.
Large, broadly, P. 734; *at his l.*, at his

ease (free to speak broadly), K. 1430; *at thy l.*, free, K. 425.

Largely, fully (generously measured), K. 1880.

Las, see *laas*.

Lasse and more, smaller and greater, high and low (of rank), K. 898.

Lat, imper., let, P. 188, K. 93, N. 623.

Latoun, latten, an alloy of copper and zinc, P. 699.

Launde, an open space in a forest, hunting-grounds (cf. *jardin*, in Canadian Fr., clearing, hunting ground), K. 833.

Laurer, laurel, K. 169.

Layneres, thongs, or laces for the armor, K. 1646.

Lazar, leper (from the name of *Lazarus* the beggar, Luke xvi. 20), P. 242.

Lechecraft, medical skill, K. 1887.

Leed, a caldron, copper; *forneys of a l.*, fire under a caldron, P. 202.

Leef, pleasing, dear, K. 979.

Leen, give, let (me) have, K. 2224 (imper. of *lene*).

Leep, lept, K. 1829.

Leet, let, P. 128, K. 348; see also *lete*.

Lekes, leeks, P. 684.

Lemes, gleams, N. 110.

Lene, to lend, P. 611.

Lene, lean, thin, P. 287, 591.

Lenger, longer, P. 330, 821, K. 1912.

Lere, learn, N. 286.

Lese, lose, K. 357, N. 322.

Lest, pleasure, desire, P. 132.

Leste, least, K. 263.

Lesyng, losing, loss, K. 849.

Lesynges, lies, leasings, K. 1069.

Lete, to leave, K. 477; pt. *leet*, P. 508; cause, *leet crye*, had announced, K. 1873; *leet brynge*, had brought, K. 2031.

Letten, hinder, prevent, K. 31; pt. *lette*, K. 1034; delay, N. 214, 264; *letten of*, refrain from, K. 459.

Letuaries, electuaries, sirups, P. 426.

Levere, rather, liefer (comp. of *leef*); *hym was l.*, he would rather, P. 293, N. 300.

Leveth, imper., believe, K. 2230.

Lewed, unlearned, P. 574; *lewed man*, layman, P. 502 (necessarily ignorant, when few but priests were educated).

Leyd, pp., laid, P. 81; *ley hond to*, imper., take hold (of the 'cuts'), P. 841: *ley on faste*, lay on stoutly, K. 1700.

Leyser, leisure, K. 330.

Licenciat, 'one licensed by the Pope to hear confessions in all places, and to administer penance independently of the local ordinaries' (established clergy), Skeat, P. 220.

Liche-wake, the watch (wake) over a dead body, K. 2100.

Licour, liquor, sap, P. 3.

Lief, beloved, N. 59.

Lifly, in a life-like, vivid manner, K. 1229.

Liggen, pr. pl., lie, K. 1347, N. 405; *lyth*, lies, N. 222; *lyth to wedde*, lies as security, K. 360.

Lighly, joyfully, K. 1012.

Ligne, verray, true descent, line, K. 693.

Likned, likened, P. 180.

Lind, linden-tree, K. 2064.

Lipsed, lisped, P. 264.

List, impers., it pleases, P. 583, K. 1092; *liste*, pt. s., P. 102, K. 194.

Listes, lists, enclosure for a tournament, K. 1687, 1808.

Litarge, white lead (as cosmetic), P. 629.

Lite, little, small, K. 1769.

Lite, moche and, great and small, P. 494.

Lith, limb, N. 55 ('locked in every limb of hers,' appears to be the meaning of this unusual expression, as we say, 'wrapped up' in a person).

Lode, load, K. 2060.

Lodemenage, pilotage, P. 403.

Lodesterre, load-star, pole-star, K. 1201.

Logge, lodge, dwelling-place, N. 33.

Logged, lodged, N. 176.

Loggyng, lodging, N. 175.

Loken, locked, N. 55, see *lith*.

Lokkes, locks (of hair), P. 81.

Lond, upon, in the country, P. 702; *londes*, lands, P. 14; *in londe*, into the country, away, N. 59.

Looketh, imper., look, K. 2215.

Longen, belong, K. 1420.

Longes, lungs, K. 1894.

Lookyng, glance, K. 1313, 1611.

Looth, loath, hateful, distasteful (with dat.), K. 979; *l. were hym*, distasteful it was to him, P. 486.

Lordshipe, lordship; *of l. preyde*, begged him to be good lord to them, K. 969.
Lordynges, good sirs, my masters, P. 761.
Lore, teaching, learning, P. 527, N. 376, 530.
Los, loss, K. 1685.
Losengeour, flatterer, N. 506.
Luce, a pike, P. 350.
Lust, pleasure, desire, P. 192, K. 460, 1074.
Lusty, pleasant, joyous, P. 80, K. 655.
Lustynesse, pleasantness, K. 1081.
Lyde, Lydia, N. 318.
Lye, lie; *withouten any l.*, truly, K. 2157.
Lyf, life, P. 71, K. 1918.
Lyk, like, P. 590, K. 443.
Lykly, likely, K. 314.
Lymes, limbs, K. 1277.
Lymytour, a friar licensed to beg within certain limits, P. 209.
Lynage, lineage, K. 252.
Lyth, see *liggen*.
Lyves, gen. s., living, K. 1537.

Maad, pp., made, P. 212.
Maat, dejected, downcast, K. 97.
Maister-strete, main street, K. 2044.
Maistow = mayst thou, N. 286.
Maistrye, *for the* (an adverbial phrase), eminently, sovereignly, P. 165.
Make, mate, companion, K. 1698.
Make a thyng, draft a document, P. 325.
Make it wys, make it a matter of discussion, raise difficulties, P. 785.
Maked, pp., made, K. 1666.
Male, bag, wallet, mail, P. 694.
Manace, menace, threat, K. 1145.
Manasynge, menacing, K. 1177.
Maner, sort of, kind of, P. 71, K. 1017, N. 26.
Mantelet, short mantle, K. 1305.
Many oon, many a one, P. 317.
Manye, mania, madness, K. 516.
Marshal in an halle, an officer who arranged the feast, and, particularly, placed the guests in order of precedence, — a position requiring readiness and tact, P. 752.
Martir, martyr (Thomas à Becket), P. 17, 770.
Martirdom, torment, martyrdom, K. 602.
Martireth, torments, K. 704.
Mary, marrow, P. 380.
Mase, wild fancy, bewilderment, N. 273.
Matere, matter, P. 727, K. 401.
Matrimoigne, matrimony, K. 2237.
Maudelayne, the M. E. form for Magdalen, P. 410.
Maugree, in spite of, K. 311, 1760.
Maunciple, a caterer or steward for a college or inn of court, P. 544.
Mede, reward, meed, P. 770.
Mede, meadow, mead, P. 89.
Medlee, of mixed color, P. 328.
Meel, a meal, N. 13.
Men, a weakened, proclitic form of *man*, one (cf. Ger. *man*, Fr. *on*), P. 149, K. 2174.
Mene, mean, intend, P. 793; pt. s. *mente*, N. 604.
Mere, mare, P. 541.
Mervaille, marvel, N. 256.
Mery, *merye*, *myrie*, merry, P. 757; pleasant (of a place), N. 146; adv., pleasantly, N. 251.
Meschaunce, mischance (personified), misfortune, K. 1151.
Meschief, *mescheef*, trouble, P. 493; *doon m.*, done mischief, caused trouble, K. 468; *at m.*, at a disadvantage, overcome, K. 1693.
Messager, messenger, K. 633.
Messe-dayes, mass-days, N. 32.
Mester, lot, K. 482.
Mesurable, moderate, P. 435.
Met (pp. of *mete*), dreamed, N. 106.
Mete, meet, fit, K. 773.
Meth, mead, a fermented drink, K. 1421.
Mette, *me*, impers., I dreamed, N. 74; *hym m.*, he dreamed, N. 258; also pers., N. 182, 213.
Mewe, a coop, mew, P. 349.
Meynee, household, retinue, K. 400, N. 574.
Ministres, officers of justice, N. 223.
Mister, trade, P. 613.
Mo, more, P. 576, K. 1077.
Moche, *mochel*, *muchel*, adj., much, great, P. 258, K. 1992; *moche and lite*, great and small, P. 494; adv., *ful moche*, very much, P. 132; *as moche*, K. 258.
Moder, mother, N. 476.

Moever, movar, first cause, K. 2129.
Mone, moon, P. 403, K. 1219.
Mone, moan, K. 508.
Mood, anger, K. 902.
Moornyng, mourning, K. 2110.
Moot, *mote*, may, must, should; *he moot reherce*, he should repeat, P. 732; may, P. 735, K. 27; pl. *moote*, P. 232, 742; pr. subj. *mote*, P. 832; pt. *moste*, must, P. 712.
Moralitee, moral (of a story), N. 620.
Mordre, n., murder, N. 201; vb., to murder, N. 405.
Mordred, pp., murdered, N. 221.
Mordrer, murderer, N. 406.
Mordryng, murdering, K. 1143.
More, greater (of rank), K. 898.
Mormal, open sore, gangrene, or cancer, P. 386.
Morne, morning, P. 358.
Mortreux, a thick, highly seasoned soup, P. 384.
Morwe, morrow, P. 334.
Morwe-tyde, morning time, N. 196.
Morwenynge, morning, morrow, K. 204, N. 482.
Mosel, muzzle, of an animal, K. 1293.
Most, mostly, chiefly, P. 561.
Moste, highest, greatest, K. 37.
Moste, see *moot*.
Mottelee, motley, P. 271.
Mountance, amount, value, K. 712.
Mowe, pr. pl., may, are able, K. 2141.
Murie, glad, merry, K. 528.
Murmure, murmurs, murmuring, K. 1601.
Myght, power, K. 72; best, K. 102.
Mynde, remembrance, K. 544, 1048.
Mynour, miner, digger, K. 1607.
Mynstralcye, minstrelsy, K. 1339, 1666.
Mysboden, insulted, K. 51.
Myshappe, to go unluckily with, suffer mishap, K. 788.

N'adde = *ne hadde*.
Nakers, kettle-drums, K. 1653.
N'am = *ne am*.
Namely, especially, K. 410, 1851.
Namo, *namore*, no more, P. 101, 544, K. 731, 1620.
Narwe, close, small, narrow, P. 625.
N'as = *ne was*.
Nat but, only, K. 1864.
N'ath = *ne hath*.
Natheles, nevertheless, P. 35.
Neet, neat, cattle, P. 597.
Nercotikes, narcotics, K. 614.
N'ere = *ne were*.
Neyles, claws, K. 1283.
Ne, not, P. 70; nor, P. 526.
Nedely, of necessity, N. 424.
Nedes, needs, of necessity, K. 311.
Nedes-cost, of necessity, K. 619.
Nedeth, impers., it must needs be, K. 2170.
Neer, *ner*, near, K. 581; comp. *neer*, nearer, P. 839; *ner*, K. 992 (see *fer*).
Newe, recently, N. 229.
Newe to begynne, of recent beginning (*to begynne* is the gerund), P. 428.
Nexte, nighest, nearest, K. 555, 1507.
Nigard, niggard, N. 95.
N'is = *ne is*.
Noght, not, P. 253, K. 1452.
N'olde = *ne wolde*, wished not, K. 166.
Nones, *nonys*, *for the*, for the nonce, occasion (or perhaps for the purpose in view), P. 379, 523.
Nonne, nun, P. 118.
N'oot = *ne wot*.
Norice, nurse, N. 295.
Norisyng(e); *of greet n.*, very nutritious, P. 437; nurture, growth, K. 2159.
Nose-thirles, nostrils, P. 557.
Notabilitee, thing worthy to be known, wise saw, N. 389.
Not-heed, crop-head, P. 109.
Nothyng, adv., not at all, K. 661, 896, 1647, N. 20.
Nouthe, *as*, just now, P. 462.
Ny, nigh, K. 472; nearly, P. 732; close, P. 588.
Nyce, foolish, N. 495, P. 388.
Nyghtertale, night-time, P. 97.

O, one, P. 304, K. 354, N. 170.
Obeisaunce, obedience, K. 2116.
Observaunce, respect, K. 187, 642 (*do o.*, render observance, pay respect).
Of (partitive), something of, K. 2227; *of smale*, some small, P. 146.
Of, concerning, in, P. 191, K. 2027.
Of (expressing agency or means), by, with, K. 420, 422, 745, 2023.

Of, preyed, prayed for (Fr. *prier de*), K. 969.
Of, off, P. 550, K. 1818.
Offended, injured, attacked, K. 51, 1536.
Offensioun, hurt, indignity, K. 1558.
Offertory, the verses of scripture chanted during the offering, P. 710.
Office, secular position (e. g., secretary to a great lord), P. 292.
Offryng, the alms regularly given at the mass, P. 450 (see note).
Ofte sithes, oftentimes, P. 485.
Oghte, ought, P. 660.
On lyve, alive, K. 2181.
Ones, once, P. 765.
Oon and oon, one by one, singly, P. 679.
Opie, opium, K. 614.
Oratorie, oratory, a small chapel for private devotions, K. 1047.
Ordynaunce, orderly arrangement, K. 1709.
Orgon, organs (the word was plural, as we say the bagpipes, the bellows), N. 31.
Orisoun, orison, prayer, K. 1514.
Orlogge, horologue, clock, N. 34.
Oth, ooth, oath, P. 120, K. 101.
Ought, aught, in any way, K. 2187.
Ounces, small portions (locks of hair), P. 677.
Out of, without, P. 452, K. 765 (cf. out of temper).
Out-hees, outcry, hue and cry, K. 1154.
Outher, either, K. 627.
Outrely, utterly, N. 409.
Out-sterte, started out, N. 227.
Over, beyond, K. 2140.
Over, upper, P. 133; *overest*, uppermost, P. 298.
Overal, everywhere, P. 216.
Over al this, besides all this, K. 1992.
Over-riden, pp., run over, K. 1164.
Over-thwart, athwart, across, K. 1133.
Owher, anywhere, P. 653.
Oxenford, Oxford, P. 285.
Oynement, ointment, P. 631.
Oynons, onions, P. 634.

Pace, to pass, K. 744, 2140; tell on, P. 36; surpass, P. 574.
Paleys, palace, K. 1341.
Palfrey, a horse for the road (in contrast with a *stede*, war-horse), P. 207.
Pan, skull, head, K. 307.
Paraments, rich adornments (of dress or otherwise), K. 1643.
Par amour (adverbial phrase), by way of love, as a lover or suitor, K. 297.
Paramours, with great love, K. 1254.
Pardee, a corruption of *par dieu*, a mild oath, P. 563.
Pardoner, one who had the Pope's license to sell pardons and indulgences. It should be observed that by church law the indulgence only included remission of penance, not of sin; but gross abuses grew out of the system. It was this matter of indulgences that, most of all, led to the Reformation, P. 543.
Parfit, perfect, P. 72, 422, K. 2151.
Parisshens, parishioners, P. 482.
Parlement, decree, K. 448.
Parte, party, K. 1724.
Partrich, partridge, P. 349.
Party, variegated (cf. parti-colored), K. 195.
Partye, a part, K. 2150; partisan, K. 1799.
Parvys, church-porch, or the open space before a church (in this case that of St. Paul's, where lawyers met for consultation), P. 310.
Pas, a walk, P. 825; paces, yards, K. 1032.
Passant, surpassing, famous, K. 1249.
Passed, surpassed, P. 448.
Passyng . . . of, surpassing . . . in, K. 2027.
Patente, letter patent, public authorization, P. 315.
Pecok, peacock, P. 104. (Ascham, *Toxophilus*, ed. Arber, p. 146, prefers the grey-goose, "men which have taken them [peacock feathers] up for gayness, hathe layde them downe agayne for profyte.")
Payen, pagan, K. 1512.
Pees, peace, K. 589.
Peire, pair, set, P. 159.
Pekke, vb., peck, N. 147.
Penaunce, pain, sorrow, K. 457.
Perced, pierced, penetrated, P. 2.
Perrye, precious stones, jewelled embroidery, K. 2078.
Pers, stuff of a blue color, P. 439.

Persoun, parson, parish-priest, P. 478.
Perturben, disturb, trouble, K. 48.
Pesen, dried peas (to make the deck slippery), I. xxviii, note.
Peyne, pain, grief, K. 439; torture, K. 275.
Peyne hym, endeavor, N. 485; *peyned hir*, took pains, P. 139.
Pighte, pt. s., pitched, K. 1831.
Piled, stripped of hair, thinly haired, P. 627.
Piler, pillar, K. 1135.
Pilour, plunderer, K. 149.
Pilwe-beer, pillow-case, P. 694.
Pitaunce, a mess of victuals, K. 224.
Pitous, compassionate, P. 143.
Pitously, piteously, K. 259.
Plat, flat, plain, K. 987.
Plentevous, plentiful, P. 344.
Plesaunce, pleasure, K. 713.
Plesen, please, P. 610.
Pley, in, in jest, in fun, K. 267.
Pleyen, play, P. 236; make merry, P. 758.
Pleyn, fully, P. 327; full, P. 315; *pleyn bataille*, open or fair fight, K. 130.
Pleyne, to complain, K. 462; *pleynen*, pr. pl., K. 393.
Pollax, pole-axe, halberd, K. 1686.
Pomel, crown of the head, K. 1831.
Pomely, dappled, P. 616.
Poraille, poor folk, P. 247.
Port, carriage, deportment, P. 69.
Portreiture, portraiture, painting, K. 1057, 1110.
Portreyinge, painting, depicting, K. 1080.
Portreyour, painter, K. 1041.
Pose, admit (for the purpose of argument), K. 304.
Post, pillar (as we say 'pillar of the church'), P. 214.
Poudre-marchaunt, a sharp flavoring powder, P. 381.
Pouped, pooped, blew abruptly, N. 579.
Poure, to pore, P. 185.
Povre, poor, P. 225.
Povrely, poorly, as a poor man, K. 554.
Poynaunt, piquant, highly seasoned, P. 352, N. 14.
Poynt o, a bit of (in any wise), K. 1908.
Poynt in good (Fr. *embonpoint*), in good condition, fleshy, P. 200.
Poynt of his desir, object of his desire, K. 643.
Practisour, practitioner, P. 422.
Presseth, presses, K. 1672.
Preve, proof, N. 163.
Preved, proved, K. 2143.
Preye, pray, P. 301; beseech, K. 625.
Preyeres, prayers, P. 231.
Pricasour, a hard rider, P. 189.
Priketh, pricks, incites, P. 11, K. 185; spur (a horse), K. 1820.
Prikyng, spurring, hard riding, P. 191, K. 1650.
Prikke, prick, thrust, K. 1748.
Prively, secretly, covertly, P. 652.
Privitee, privity, private affairs, K. 553.
Profreth, proffers, K. 557.
Propre, own, P. 540, 581, K. 2179.
Properly, appropriately (to the character of each), P. 729.
Proved wel, was well proved, P. 547.
Prow, advantage, profit, N. 130.
Pruce sheld, Prussian shield (a small triangular buckler), K. 1264.
Pryme, the first quarter of the day, 6–9 A. M., K. 1331 (here six o'clock).
Prys, price, P. 815; credit, reputation, P. 67, 237, K. 1383.
Pulled, plucked (a living one, I take it, expressing any worthless or miserable object), P. 177.
Pultrye, poultry, P. 598.
Purchas, occasional gains (as opposed to fixed income, *rente*), P. 256.
Purchasour, conveyancer, P. 318.
Purchasyng, conveyancing, P. 320.
Pure, very, K. 421.
Purfiled, edged, bordered, P. 193.
Purtreye, draw (probably used here of illuminating MSS.), P. 96.
Purveiaunce, foresight, providence, K. 394, 807, 2153.
Pykepurs, pick-purse, K. 1140.
Pynche at, find fault with, P. 326.
Pynched, puckered, fluted, P. 151.
Pyne, to torture (judicially), K. 888; pp. *pyned*, N. 239.

Qualm, sickness, disease, K. 1156.
Quelle, to kill, N. 570.
Queynt, pp., quenched, K. 1463; pt. s. *queynte*, went out, K. 1476.
Queynte, strange, quaint, K. 673, 1475.

Quike, pl., alive, K. 157.
Quiked agayn, pt. s., revived, K. 1477.
Quilly, free and clear, clean (as in 'clean gone'), K. 934.
Quite, to requite, repay, P. 770; make quits, hence ransom, K. 174.
Quod, quoth, P. 788, K. 49.
Quook, quaked, trembled, K. 713, 904.

Rad, see *rede*.
Rage, to romp, act wantonly, P. 257.
Rage, rush, gust of wind, K. 1127.
Ransake, to ransack, search (for plunder), K. 147.
Rasour, razor, K. 1559.
Raughte, reached, P. 136, K. 2057.
Raunsoun, ransom, K. 166, 318.
Ravenes, raven's, K. 1286.
Rebel, rebellious, P. 833, K. 2188.
Recche, reck, care, K. 1387; *recche nat to sterve*, care not though I die, K. 540; *rekke*, K. 1399; pr. s. *roghte*, N. 520.
Recchelees, reckless, regardless, N. 287, P. 179.
Reconforte, to comfort, K. 1994.
Recorde, remind, call to mind, P. 829.
Rede, to advise, counsel, K. 2213; explain, N. 76.
Rede, to read, P. 709; pp. *rad*, K. 1737; imper. *reed*, N. 310.
Redily, ready, K. 1418.
Redoutynge, reverence, K. 1192.
Redy, ready, P. 21.
Reed, counsel, plan, K. 358.
Reed, al hir, wholly their adviser, P. 665.
Registre, register, roll, K. 1954.
Regne, reign, kingdom, K. 8, 766.
Reherce, to rehearse, repeat, P. 732.
Rehersyng, rehearsing (exchange of civilities), K. 792.
Rekene, to reckon, P. 401; pr. s. *rekne*, recount, K. 1075.
Rekenyng, reckoning, statement, P. 600; pl., bills, P. 760.
Remes, realms, N. 316.
Remenaunt, remnant, rest, P. 724, N. 84.
Renges, ranks, K. 1736.
Renne, pr. pl., run, K. 2010; *renneth*, runs, P. 1777; *ronnen*, pt. p., ran, K. 2067.
Rennyng, running; *at a r. with his heed*, by butting, P. 551.
Rente, fixed income, P. 256, 373.
Replecciouη, repletion, N. 17.
Replicacioun, reply, gainsaying, K. 988.
Reportour, reporter, P. 814.
Rescous, rescue, K. 1785.
Rese, shake, K. 1128.
Resons, opinions, P. 274.
Resoun, reason, P. 37; right, P. 847.
Resouneth, resounds, K. 420.
Respit, delay, K. 90.
Rethor, rhetorician, fine writer, N. 387.
Reule, rule, P. 173.
Reuled, ruled, P. 816, K. 814; inf. *reulen*, N. 224.
Reve, steward or bailiff of a manor, P. 587 (originally applied to a great variety of offices of trust from *shire-reve*, sheriff, to *hog-reve*, pound-keeper).
Revers, reverse, contrary, N. 157.
Rewe, imp. s. (or subj.), have pity, K. 1005, 1375.
Rewfulleste, most sorrowful, K. 2028.
Rewthe, ruth, pity, K. 56.
Reysed, pp., campaigned, seen service, P. 54.
Richesse, riches, K. 397.
Ride, ride, P. 94; pr. s. *rit*, K. 116, 123; pt. s. *rood*, P. 328, K. 108; *riden*, pt. p., rode, P. 825, K. 2039.
Righte, direct, K. 1881.
Rightes, at alle, fully and rightly, K. 994.
Rit, see *ride*.
Roghte, see *recche*.
Roialliche, royally, ceremoniously, P. 378.
Roially, royally, splendidly and publicly, K. 855.
Romed, roamed, paced back and forth, K. 207; strolled, K. 670; *rometh*, paces, N. 360.
Ronnen, see *renne*.
Rood, see *ride*.
Roos, vb., rose, P. 823, K. 1356.
Roost, roast, P. 206.
Roste, to roast, P. 383; pp. *rosted*, P. 147.
Rote, a violin-like instrument with three strings, P. 236.
Rouketh, cowers, crouches, K. 450.

Rouncy, a hackney, common cart-horse, P. 390.
Roundel, a song with several repeated lines and a refrain, K. 671.
Route, rout, company, P. 622, K. 31.
Rudeliche, rudely, P. 734.
Ruggy, rough, disordered, K. 2025.
Rumbel, rumbling, K. 1121.

Sacred teeres, devoted tears, K. 1063.
Sad, sober, serious, K. 2127.
Sadly, firmly, determinedly, K. 1744.
Salueth, salutes, greets, hails, K. 634.
Saluyng, greeting, K. 791.
Sanguyn, sanguine, ruddy, P. 333; K. 1310; blood red, P. 439.
Sarge, coarse stuff, serge, P. 1710.
Saufly, safely, N. 388.
Saugh, see *se*.
Sautrye, psaltery, P. 296, an instrument like a zither, having a sounding box under the strings.
Save, sage, K. 1855.
Sawceflem, pimpled, P. 625.
Sawe, saying, saw, K. 305, 668.
Say, see *se*.
Scalled, scurfy, P. 627.
Scapen, to escape, K. 249.
Scarsly, sparingly, P. 583.
Scathe, a pity, too bad, P. 446 (in this case, because the Wife of Bath lost through deafness much of the gossip she dearly loved).
Science, knowledge (legal), P. 316.
Sclendre, slender, P. 587; light (of a meal), N. 13.
Scole, manner, school, P. 125.
Scoler, scholar, P. 260.
Scoleye, to attend school (pursue his studies), P. 302.
Scriptures, writings, books, K. 1186.
Seche, *for to*, to seek, P. 784 (in the sense of 'far to seek,' gerund with passive force).
Secree, secret, N. 95.
See, *se*, *seen*, see, K. 56; ger. *to sene*, K. 177; pt. s. *saugh*, saw, P. 764; *seigh*, P. 193; *say*, N. 294; pt. pl. *syen*, N. 558; pp. *seyn*, N. 461; K. 1796.
See, *on to*, to look upon, K. 224.
Seet, sat, K. 1217; pl. *seten*, K. 2035.
Seege, siege, P. 56, K. 79.
Seeke, sick, P. 18.
Selde, seldom, K. 681.
Selve, same, self-same, K. 1726.
Sely, simple, N. 555.
Semed, seemed, P. 39.
Semely, seemly, P. 751; properly, agreeably, P. 123.
Seigh, see *se*.
Seistow, sayest thou, K. 267.
Seeke[n] . . . to, seek after, P. 13f.
Semi-cope, a short cope, P. 262.
Sendal, a light fine silk, P. 440.
Sene, visible, P. 134, K. 1107.
Sene, *to*, see *see*.
Sentence, thought, subject-matter, P 306, 798; subject, N. 394; opinion, K. 2144.
Sergeant of the Lawe, a law officer for the crown, P. 309.
Serie, series (array of arguments), K. 2209.
Servant, K. 956 (used here technically for a lover).
Servisable, willing to be of use, obliging, P. 99.
Sesons, seasons, P. 347.
Seten, pp., sat, K. 594.
Sethe, seethe, boil, P. 383.
Sette hir aller cappe, pulled the wool over all their eyes, P. 586.
Sette, put down, reckon at, K. 712.
Seurtee, security, surety, K. 746.
Sewed, followed, N. 517.
Seye, *seyn*, *seyen*, to say, P. 181, K. 410; pt. *seyde*, P. 183, K. 57.
Seyl, sail, P. 696.
Seynd, singed, broiled, N. 25.
Seynte charitee, *for*, for holy charity, for gracious' sake, K. 863, N. 500.
Shake, shaken, P. 406.
Shal (used absolutely), must, K. 1696.
Shamfast, modest, K. 1197.
Shamfastnesse, modesty, bashfulness, P. 840.
Shap, shape, K. 1031.
Shape, *shapen*, to purpose, plan, P. 772; arrange, P. 809; ordained, K. 250, 367, 534.
Shaply, fit, suitable, P. 372.
Shave, shaven, P. 588.
Sheef, sheaf, P. 104.
Sheeldes, crowns, *écus* (coin), P. 278.
Shene, bright, beautiful, P. 115, K. 210.
Shent, pp., injured, K. 1896.

Shepne, stables, K. 1142.
Shere, shears, K. 1559.
Shet, pp., shut, K. 1739.
Shirreve, sheriff, governor of a shire or county, P. 359.
Sho, shoe, perhaps a shoe-clout, P. 253.
Shiveren, shiver, break to pieces, K. 1747.
Shode, temple (of the head), K. 1149.
Sholde, should, ought to, P. 249.
Shoon, pt. s., shone, P. 198.
Shorte, shorten, P. 791.
Short-sholdred, square-shouldered (?) (Skeat explains, 'short in the upper arm'), P. 549.
Shrewe, curse, beshrew, N. 607.
Shrighte, shrieked, K. 1959, N. 542; *shryked*, N. 580.
Shul, shall, K. 889, 1498; pl. *shullen*, K. 2156.
Shyne, shin, P. 386; pl., K. 421.
Sight, prevision, providence, K. 814.
Sike, to sigh, K. 682; pt. s. *siked*, sighed, K. 2127.
Siker, sure, K. 2191.
Sikes, sighs, K. 1062.
Sit, sits, K. 741, 942.
Sith, *sithen*, since, K. 72, 434; *gon s.*, ago (lit., years past since [then]), K. 663.
Sithes, times, P. 485.
Slake, slack, slow, K. 2043.
Slee, *sleen*, to slay, P. 661, K. 364; *sleeth*, slays, K. 260; pp. *slawe*, slain, N. 194; pt. *slough*, slew, K. 122, *slow*, K. 1608.
Sleep, slept, P. 98, 397.
Sleere, slayer, K. 1147.
Sleighte, cunning, craft, P. 604 (cf. *sleight* of hand).
Slepen, pr. pl., sleep, P. 10.
Slepyng, sleep, N. 192.
Slepy, sleep-giving (see note), K. 529.
Slider, slippery, K. 406.
Slogardie, sloth, sluggardy, K. 184.
Slough, slew, see *slee*.
Slyly, cautiously, prudently, K. 586.
Smerte, adv., smartly, P. 149; n., pain, K. 1367.
Smerte, impers., to smart, suffer, be pained, P. 230, 534, K. 536.
Smokyng the temple, while the temple smoked (with incense), K. 1423. (A curious misreading of *Tes.* vii., 72, *Fu mondo il tempio*, the temple was clean. Chaucer read, *Fumando il tempio*.)
Smoot, smote, P. 149, K. 846.
Snewed, snowed, abounded, P. 345.
Snybben, snub, chide, P. 523.
Socour, succor, K. 60.
Sodaynly, suddenly, K. 260; *sodeynliche*, K. 717.
Solas, solace, mirth, P. 798.
Solempne, important, P. 209, 364.
Solempnely, pompously, P. 274.
Solempnitee, ceremony, festivities, K. 12, 1844.
Som . . . som, one . . . another, K. 397, 399, 2173, 4.
Somdel, somewhat, P. 174, 446, K. 1312.
Somer, summer, P. 394.
Somnour, summoner, for an ecclesiastical court (see note and *Introduction*, p. lviii.), P. 543.
Somtyme, formerly, P. 65.
Sond, sand, N. 447.
Sondry, sundry, various, P. 14, 347, N. 316.
Sone, soon, K. 1412, 1812.
Song, *songe*, see *syngeth*.
Sooth, truth, P. 284, K. 663.
Sooth, *sothe*, adj., true, P. 845, K. 767.
Soothfastnesse, truth, N. 508.
Soothly, truly, P. 117, K. 1078.
Sop in wyn, sop in wine, bread dipped in wine, P. 334. (A comforting morning dish.)
Soper, supper, P. 348, K. 33.
Sore, sorely, P. 230, K. 536.
Sort, lot, destiny, P. 844.
Sorwe, sorrow, K. 361, 419.
Sorweful, sorrowful, K. 212.
Sory, sorry, doleful, K. 1146; *sory contenaunce*, sad face, K. 1152.
Sotil, fine-wrought, dainty, K. 196, thin, 1172; subtle, skilful, K. 1191.
Soun, a sound, P. 674, pl. *sounes*, K. 1654.
Souple, supple, soft, P. 203.
Sovereyn, high, supreme, P. 67.
Sovereynly, surpassingly, N. 542.
Sowne, to sound, play, P. 565.
Sownynge, importing, dwelling upon, P. 275; *s. in*, tending to, informed with, P. 307.

Space, held . . . the, followed closely, kept his place, P. 176 (the expression is ill explained); *as in so litel s.*, for so short a time (in building), K. 1038; similarly, P. 87.

Spare, refrain, abstain from, P. 192, 737.

Sparre, bar, beam, K. 132, 218.

Sparth, double-edged battle-axe, K. 1662.

Sparwe, sparrow, P. 626.

Speces, species, K. 2155.

Special, in, specially, P. 444.

Spede, speed, prosper, P. 769; pt. s. *spedde*, hastened, K. 359.

Speken, speak, P. 142; pt. s. *spak*, P. 124, K. 54; pr. subj. *speke*, P. 734.

Spiced conscience, sophisticated conscience, P. 526. 'Scrupulous . . . about non-essentials, while easy "about the weightier matters of the law."' Corson.

Spicerye, spices (in the larger sense, including aromatic gums), K. 2077.

Spore, spur, K. 1745; *spores*, pl., P. 473.

Sprad, pp., spread, K. 2045.

Squyer, a squire, an aspirant for knighthood, P. 79.

Stablissed, established, K. 2137.

Stalketh, walks stealthily, K. 621 (cf. deer-*stalking*).

Starf, see *sterve*.

Stemed, flamed, glowed, P. 202.

Stente(n), to stop, cease, K. 45; pp. *stent*, stopped, K. 510.

Stepe, bright, sparkling, P. 201.

Sterres, stars, P. 268, K. 1179.

Stert, at a, start, in a twinkling of an eye, K. 847.

Sterte, to start, leap, K. 186.

Stertlyng, agile, spirited, K. 644.

Sterve, die, K. 286; pt. s. *starf*, K. 75.

Steven(e), voice, K. 1704; *at unset s.*, at a time not agreed upon, K. 666.

Stewe, fish-pond, P. 350.

Stille, at rest, quietly, still, K. 145, 2127, N. 401.

Stille, be . . . lat, let . . . stay, let . . . alone, N. 623.

Stith, an anvil (cf. *stithy*, a forge), K. 1168.

Stiwardes, stewards, P. 579.

Stoke, to stick, thrust, K. 1688.

Stokkes, stocks, sticks, K. 2076.

Stole, pp., stolen, K. 1769.

Stomblen, stumble, K. 1755.

Stonden, to stand, P. 88; *s. at*, abide by, P. 778.

Stongen, stung, K. 221.

Stoor, store (of implements, etc.), stock (of a farm), P. 598.

Stope, advanced, N. 1.

Store, telle no, take no account; have no opinion, N. 334.

Storie, a saint's life or *exemplum*, a moral anecdote, P. 709.

Stot, a horse, P. 615.

Stounde, a moment, brief space of time, K. 354.

Stoute, bold, K. 1296.

Straunge, foreign, P. 13, 464.

Strecche, to stretch, N. 488; pt. s. *straughte*, K. 2058.

Stree, straw, K. 2060.

Streem, stream, river, P. 464; pl. *stremes*, currents, P. 402; beams (of light), rays, K. 637.

Streite, pp., drawn, N. 537.

Streite, closely, snugly, P. 457.

Streit (e), strait, strict, P. 174; narrow, K. 1126; *streit of herbergage*, limited in accommodations, lodgings, N. 169.

Strengthe, with, by force, K. 1541.

Strepe, to strip, K. 148.

Streyneth, constrains, N. 424.

Strike of flex, hank of flax, P. 676.

Strof, strove, vied with, K. 180.

Strondes, strands, shores, P. 13.

Stynte, pt. s., cease, K. 1563; imper. *stynt*, K. 1490.

Subtilly, craftily, P. 610.

Suffisaunce, sufficiency, P. 490; *hertes s.*, contentment of heart, N. 19.

Suffisaunt, sufficient, K. 773.

Surcote, overcoat, P. 617.

Sustene, sustain, hold up, K. 1135.

Suster, sister, K. 13; pl. *sustren*, K. 161, *sustres*, N. 47.

Swelte, fainted, K. 498.

Swerd, sword, P. 112, K. 717.

Sweven(e), dream, N. 76; pl. *swevenis* (for the rime), N. 101.

Swich, such, P. 3, 243, K. 4.

Swore, pp., sworn, P. 810.

Swough, soughing of wind, K. 1121 (a continuous sound; the *rumbel* is a

shorter gust or roaring heard above the monotone).
Swowned, swooned, K. 55.
Swownyng, swooning, K. 1961.
Swyn, swine, P. 598.
Swynk, toil, P. 188, 540.
Swynken, to toil, P. 186.
Swynkere, toiler, laborer, P. 531.
Syn, since (contracted form of *sithen*), P. 601, 853, K. 415.
Syngeth, imper. sing., N. 500.

T', prep., to.
Tabard, a short-sleeved, blouse-like coat, from the 16th century restricted to a herald's use, P. 541; an inn with a sign of this form, P. 20.
Taffata, taffeta, a silk stuff, P. 440.
Taille, by, by tally, on account, P. 570.
Tak, imper., take, K. 226.
Take, taken, K. 1693, 1789.
Takel, tackle, accoutrements (as arrows, etc.), P. 106.
Talen, to tell stories, P. 772.
Tappestere, female tapster, barmaid, P. 241.
Tapycer, upholsterer, P. 362.
Targe, a target, shield, P. 471.
Tars, cloth of, tartary silk, K. 1302.
Tas, heap, K. 147.
Teche(n), to teach, P. 308; *techen to*, direct to, N. 129.
Temple, an inn of court, a place where lawyers lodged and lived together, P. 567. (So called because the chief Inn of Court at London occupied, as it still does, the buildings and land taken from the suppressed order of Knights Templar.)
Tene, sorrow, grief, K. 2248.
Terciane, tertian, N. 139.
Terme, allotted period, K. 171.
Testers, headpieces, K. 1641.
Than, thanne, then, P. 12, 535.
Thankes (adverbial genitive), willingly; *hir t.*, of their own free will, K. 768; *his t.*, willingly, K. 1249.
That, that which, K. 567.
Thee, thrive, N. 156.
Ther, where, P. 547, K. 1224.
Ther as, where, where that, P. 34, 172, K. 200, 1116.
Ther to, besides, moreover, P. 153, 239.
Thider, thither, K. 405, 1696.
Thikke, thick set, stocky, P. 549; thickly set, K. 217; crowded together, K. 1652.
Thilke, that same, P. 182, K. 1115.
Thirled, pierced, K. 1852.
Thise, these, P. 701, K. 673 (the 'e' is silent).
Tho, those, P. 498, K. 265, 1493.
Tho, then, K. 135, 779.
Thoughte fighte, thought good (planned) to fight, K. 126.
Thoughte, see *thynken*.
Thral, enslaved, thrall, K. 694.
Threste, to thrust, push, K. 1754.
Thridde, third, K. 605, N. 193.
Thriftily, becomingly, carefully bestowed, P. 105.
Throte, throat, K. 1155, N. 49, 66.
Thryes, thrice, P. 63, 463, K. 2094.
Thurgh, through, K. 362.
Thurgh-fare, thoroughfare, K. 1989.
Thurgh-girt, pierced through, K. 152.
Thurgh-out, through, K. 238, N. 398.
Thynketh, impers., it seems, P. 37, K. 2183; pt. *thoughte*, P. 385, 682, 785.
Til, to, P. 180, K. 620.
Tipet, the end of a monk's cowl (used as a pocket), P. 233.
To reste, at rest, P. 30.
To, toe, K. 1868; pl. *toon*, N. 42; *toos*, N. 360.
To-breste, burst asunder, K. 1753.
To-brosten, burst, broken in pieces, K. 1833, 1899.
Togidre, together, P. 824.
To-hewen, cut or hewn in pieces, K. 1751.
Tollen, 'to take a portion of a grist for grinding it' (Corson), P. 562.
Tonge, tongue, P. 712.
Tonne-greet, large as a tun in circumference, K. 1136.
Tool, weapon, N. 96.
Torets, swivels (for fastening the leash to a dog's collar), K. 1294.
Torne, turn, K. 630.
To-shrede, pt. pl., cut in shreds, K. 1751.
Tour, tower, K. 172, 419.
Touret, turret, K. 1051.
Trapped, having trappings, K. 2032.
Trace, Thrace, K. 1114, 1271.
Trappures, trappings, K. 1641.

Trays, harness, traces, K. 1281.
Trede, tread, K. 2164.
Tresoun, treason, treachery, K. 1143.
Tretee, treaty, K. 430.
Tretys, shapely, P. 152.
Trewe, true, P. 531.
Trewely, truly, P. 481.
Trompe, trumpet, P. 674, K. 1316.
Tronchoun, the butt (or part remaining in the hand) of a broken spear, K. 1757.
Trone, throne, K. 1671.
Trouthe, truth, P. 46; pledge, promise, K. 752.
Trowe, believe, P. 155.
Trussed up, packed in (probably fastened to and protruding from), P. 681.
Trusteth, imper. pl., trust, believe, K. 1324.
Tukked, tucked up, P. 621.
Tweye, two, twain, P. 704, 792, K. 40, 270.
Twyned threed, a doubled or twisted thread, K. 1172.
Tydes, tides, P. 401.
Twynne (literally separate), depart, go on, P. 835.

Uncouth, unknown, strange, K. 1639.
Under the sonne, to the eastward under a low-lying sun, K. 839. (This is the usual and most attractive interpretation, which I accept on Professor Kittredge's authority, feeling, however, that this very common phrase may mean no more than 'all about.' Cf. the similar expression in Malory, 'Thenne the Kynge loked *aboute the world* and sawe afore hym . . . a lytel shyp,' *Morte Darthur* (Somner), p. 125.)
Undern, the time from 9 A. M. to 12 M., N. 402; here, the time of the mid-day meal, about 11 A. M.
Undergrowe, undergrown, small of stature, P. 156.
Undertake, affirm, venture to say, P. 288, N. 391; to assume a responsibility, P. 405.
Unknowe, unknown, P. 126, K. 548.
Unkonnyng, ignorant, inexperienced, K. 1535.
Unset, not appointed or planned, K. 666.
Unwist of hym (absolute cons.), it being unknown to him (Palamon), K. 2119. A slavish translation of *Tes.* xii. 4, *Non sappiend' esso*. Chaucer possibly misread — *d'esso*, 'of him.'
Unyolden, pp., not having yielded or surrendered, K. 1784.
Up, . . . *armed* (sep. prefix), fitted out, K. 994.
Up-haf, uplifted, raised, K. 1570.
Upon, on, P. 617.
Upon lond, 'perhaps the same as up country, far inland' (Corson), P. 702.
Up peyne, upon pain or penalty, K. 1685.
Upright, upwards (the body lying flat on its back), K. 1150, N. 222.
Up-riste, rising, K. 193.
Up-so-doun, upside down, K. 519.
Upsterte, started up, K. 441.
Up-yaf, gave up, gave forth, K. 1569.
Usage, experience, K. 1590.

Vanysshynge, *made a*, vanished, K. 1502.
Vassalage, valiant and faithful service (to his feudal lord), K. 2196.
Vavasour, a sub-vassal, holding a small fief, a country gentleman, P. 360.
Venerye, hunting, P. 166, K. 1450.
Venym, venom, poison, K. 1893.
Ventusyng, cupping (in surgery), K. 1889.
Verdit, verdict, P. 787.
Verraily, verily, truly, P. 338.
Verray, true, very, P. 72, 422.
Vers, pl., verses, N. 493.
Vertue, power, virtue, P. 4, K. 1391; ability, K. 578.
Vertuous, efficient (in begging), P. 251.
Vese, a gust or rush of wind, K. 1127.
Vestiments, vestments, K. 2090.
Veyl, vail, P. 695.
Veyn, vain, K. 236.
Veyne-blood, bleeding at a vein (surgical), K. 1889.
Viage, voyage, journey, P. 77, 723.
Vigilyes, vigils, evening services 'on the eve of a festival' (Skeat), P. 377.
Vileinye, coarseness (of language), P. 70, 740; churlishness, ill-breeding, P. 726; disgrace, K. 1871.
Vitaille, victuals, P. 569, 749.

Vouche-sauf, vouchsafe, consent, P. 807.
Voyden, to expel, K. 1893.

Wake-pleyes, ceremonies attending the watch over the dead, K. 2102.
Walet, wallet, P. 681.
Wan, see *wynne*.
Wanhope, despair, K. 391.
Wanie, wane, K. 1220.
Wantoun, free, unrestrained (in manner), P. 208.
Wantownesse, wantonness, affected jollity, P. 264.
War, cautious, P. 309; *was w.*, perceived, was aware, K. 840.
War hym, let him beware, P. 662.
Ware, a town in Hertfordshire, southern England, P. 692.
Wastel-breed, bread made of the finest flour, P. 147.
Wawes, waves, K. 1100.
Wayke, weak, K. 29.
Waymentyng(e), wailing, lamentation, K. 137, 1063.
Wayted, watched, P. 571; *wayteth*, watches (his chance), K. 364; *wayted after*, looked out for, sought after, P. 525.
Webbe, a weaver, P. 362.
Wedde, to, as a pledge, K. 360.
Wedden, to wed, K. 974; pt. *weddede*, K. 10.
Wede, clothing, K. 148.
Weep, see *wepen*.
Wel, adv., very, full, much, P. 614, K. well for 396; *w. hym was therwith*, it was him (in his love), N. 56.
Weylaway, alas, well-a-way, K. 80, N. 560.
Wele, weal, happiness, K. 37.
Welle, well, fountain, source, K. 2179.
Wende, see *wene*.
Wende(n), to go, P. 16, 21, K. 1356; pass away, K. 2167.
Wene, to ween, think, K. 797; pt. s. *wende*, K. 411.
Wepe, to weep, P. 144; pt. s. *weep*, K. 1487.
Wepne, weapon, K. 733.
Were, to guard, defend, K. 1692.
Were, pr. pl., wear, K. 2090; *wered*, wore, P. 75.
Werre, war, P. 47, K. 429.
Werreye(n), to wage war with, K. 626, 686.
Werte, wart, P. 555.
Wessh, washed, K. 1425.
Wete, wet, K. 422.
Wex, n., wax, P. 675.
Wexeth, waxes, becomes, K. 2166; pt. s. *wex*, became, grew, K. 504; pr. p. *wexyng*, waxing, increasing, K. 1220.
Wey, weye, way, P. 34, 467.
Weyeth, weighs, esteems, K. 923.
Weyleth, wails, K. 363.
What (exclamation), why! lo! P. 184, 854.
Whelkes, pimples, blotches, P. 632.
Wher, whether, K. 1394, N. 311.
Whether, which of two, K. 998.
Which, what, of what sort; *which a*, what a, K. 1817; pl. *whiche*, P. 40.
Whilom, formerly, once on a time, A. 795, K. 1, 1545.
Whippeltre, cornel-tree, K. 2065.
Wight, person, living creature, P. 71, 326, K. 1627.
Wighte, weight, K. 1287.
Wikke, wicked, evil, K. 229, N. 603.
Wilfully, voluntarily, N. 276.
Wilnest, (thou) desirest, K. 751; 3 s. *wilneth*, K. 1706.
Wiltow, wilt thou, K. 298.
Wimpel, wimple, a kerchief covering the neck and throat, P. 151.
Wirche, to work, K. 1901.
Wise, manner, fashion, K. 480, 882.
Wisly, truly, surely, K. 1005, 1376.
Wit, understanding, P. 279, 746.
Witen, pr. pl., know, K. 402; pr. 1, 3 s. *woot*, P. 389, K. 28; pr. 2 s. *wost*, *woost*, knowest, K. 305, 1449; pr. subj. *wiste*, P. 766.
With, by, K. 1866.
Withholde, pp., maintained, supported, P. 511.
Withouten, without, P. 538; besides, P. 461.
Withseye, withseyn, to gainsay, P. 805, K. 282.
Witynge, knowledge, K. 753.
Wlatsom, loathsome, hateful, N. 233.
Wo, woe, K. 1766; sorrow, lament, K. 42; adj., sorrowful, P. 351 (but the construction may be, 'it was a sorry business (*wo*) for his cook').

Wodebynde, woodbine, K. 650.
Wofullere, the more sorrowful, K. 482.
Wol, *wole*, will, P. 42, K. 880; 2 s. *wolt*, K. 766; pl. *woln*, K. 1263; pt. s. *wolde*, would, P. 144; pt. pl. *wolden*, P. 27; wished, N. 467.
Woltow = *wolt thou*, K. 686.
Wommanhede, womanliness, K. 890.
Wonder, adj., wonderful, K. 1215; adv., woudrous, P. 483, K. 796.
Wonderly, wonderfully, remarkably, P. 84.
Wone, custom, usage, P. 335, K. 182.
Woneden, pt. pl., dwelt, K. 2069; pr. pt. *wonyng*, dwelling, living, P. 388.
Wonyng, a dwelling, home, P. 606.
Wood, mad, P. 582, K. 471.
Woodly, madly, K. 443.
Woodnesse, madness, K. 1153.
Wook, awake, K. 535.
Worship, honor, respect, K. 1065.
Worshipful, honorable, K. 577.
Worshipe, to honor, render due respect to, K. 1393.
Worth, *was noght*, was not worth while, P. 785.
Wortes, herbs, N. 401.
Wostow = *wost thou*, see *wite*.
Wrastleth, wrestles, K. 2103.
Wrastlyng, wrestling, P. 548.
Wrecche, wretched, K. 248.
Wreke, wreak, avenge, K. 103.
Wrethe, a wreath, K. 1287.
Wrighte, workman, P. 614.
Writ, writes, N. 303.
Wrooth, wroth, angry, P. 451.
Wydwe, widow, P. 253, N. 1.
Wyke, week, K. 681; pl., K. 992.
Wynne, win, conquer, P. 594; pt. s. *wan*, won, P. 442, K. 131.
Wys, adv., truly, surely, K. 1928; *as w. God helpe me*, as surely as God may help me, N. 588.
Wyve, *to*, dat., to wife, as a wife, K. 1002.

Y-, a prefix chiefly used with the pps. of verbs. It represents A.S. *ge*, which is cognate with the same prefix in Germ. e. g., *ge*habt, *ge*geben.
Yaf (pt. of *yeve*), gave, K. 583; cared, P. 177.
Y-been, been, N. 477.
Y-bete, beaten, K. 121; *newe y-b.*, just forged, K. 1304.
Y-bore, *y-born*, borne, carried, P. 378, K. 1836.
Y-born, born, K. 161.
Y-bounden, bound, K. 291.
Y-brent, burnt, K. 88.
Y-broght, brought, K. 253.
Y-clenched, clinched, K. 1133.
Y-cleped, called, P. 410, K. 9; *y-clept*, P. 376.
Y-corve, cut, K. 1155.
Y-don, done, K. 167; *y-doon*, N. 600; *y-do*, K. 1676.
Y-drawe, drawn, P. 396, K. 86.
Y-dropped, bedropped, bedewed, K. 2026.
Ye, eye, P. 10, K. 238 (this is the form in rime; within the verse *eye*, pl. *eyen*, is common).
Yeddynges, songs (particularly ballads and romances), P. 237.
Yeer, *yer*, year, P. 347, K. 523; pl. *yeer*, P. 82.
Yeld-halle, guild-hall, P. 370 (see P. 364, note).
Yeldyng, yielding, produce, P. 596.
Yelleden, yelled, N. 569.
Yelpe, to boast, K. 1380.
Yeman, yeoman, commoner, retainer, P. 101; pl. *yemen*, K. 1870.
Yerde, rod, P. 149, K. 529.
Yerd, yard, enclosure, N. 27.
Yet now, even now, K. 298.
Yeve, to give, P. 223.
Y-falle, fallen, P. 25.
Y-fetered, fettered, K. 371.
Y-go, gone, P. 286.
Y-holde, held, esteemed, K. 1516, 2100.
Yiftes, gifts, K. 1340.
Yif (imper. of *yive*), give, K. 1402, 1562.
Yive, to give, P. 225; pp. *yiven*, K. 57.
Y-knowe, known, P. 423.
Y-lad, drawn, P. 530.
Y-laft, left, K. 1888.
Y-liche, alike, K. 1668.
Y-logged, lodged, N. 171.
Y-lyk, alike, P. 592; *y-lik*, K. 1876; *y-like*, K. 681.
Y-maked, pp., made, K. 1207, 1997.
Y-met, pp., met, K. 1766.